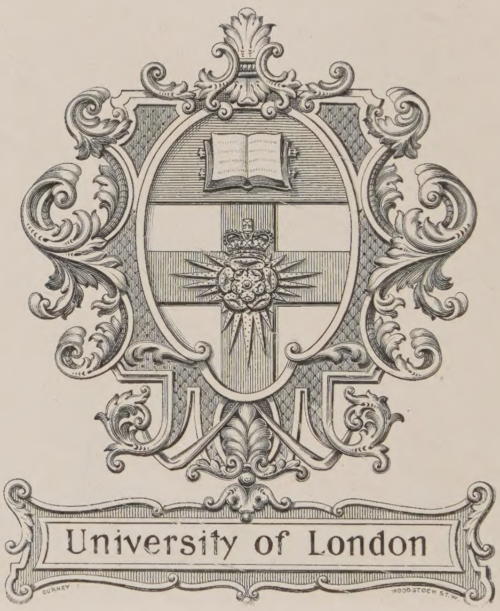
THIS BOOK
MUST NOT BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LIBRARY

PARL. PAPERS
FOR REFERENCE ONLY.


University of London
GURNEY
WOODSTOCK ST. W.

616990

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

3 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXXI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY OF APRIL
TO THE SIXTH DAY OF MAY, 1903.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1903.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

8472

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/parliamentary-debates_april-21-may-9-1903_121

CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

HISTORY.

CONQUEST to 34 GEO. II.—1066 to 1760.

Vol. 1 to 15, 1 WILL. I. to 34 GEO. II.
1066-1760

REIGN OF GEORGE III.—1760 to 1820.

Vol. 15 to 35, 1 GEO. III. to 40 GEO. III.
1760-1800

(FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 35 ....41 GEO. III..........1801
— 36 ....42 — 1802

(SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 36 ....42 GEO. III. 1802-3

DEBATES.

First Series.

(SECOND PARLIAMENT—*continued.*)

Vol. 1 & 2...44 GEO. III.......1803-4
— 3 to 5...45 — 1805
— 6 & 7...46 — 1806

(THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 8 & 9...47 GEO. III. 1806-7

(FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 9 to 11...48 GEO. III. 1807-8
— 12 — 14...49 — 1809
— 15 — 17...50 — 1810
— 18 — 20...51 — ... 1810-11
— 21 — 23...52 — 1812

(FIFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 24 to 26...53 GEO. III. ... 1812-13
— 27 & 28...54 — ... 1813-14
— 29 to 31...55 — ... 1814-15
— 32 — 34...56 — 1816
— 35 & 36...57 — 1817
— 37 — 38...58 — 1818

(SIXTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 39 & 40...59 GEO. III. 1819
— 41 ....60 — ... 1819-20

Second Series.

REIGN OF GEORGE IV.—1820 to 1830

(SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3... 1 GEO. IV. 1820
4 & 5... 2 — 1821
— 6 — 7... 3 — 1822
— 8 — 9... 4 — 1823
— 10 — 11... 5 — 1824
— 12 — 13... 6 — 1825-6
— 14 — 15... 7 — 1826

(EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 16 .... 7 GEO. IV. 1826
— 17 .... 8 — 1827
— 18 & 19... 9 — 1828
— 20 — 21...10 — 1829
— 22 to 25...11 — 1830

Third Series.

REIGN OF WILLIAM IV.—1830 to 1837.

(NINTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3... 1 WILL. IV.......1830-1

(TENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 4 to 8... 2 WILL. IV. 1831
— 9 — 14... 3 — 1832

(ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 15 to 20... 4 WILL. IV....... 1833
— 21 — 25... 5 — 1834

(TWELFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 26 to 30... 6 WILL. IV....... 1835
— 31 — 35... 7 — 1836
— 36 — 38... 8 — 1837

REIGN OF VICTORIA—1837 to 1901.

(THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 39 to 44... 1 VICTORIA 1838
— 45 — 50... 2 — 1839
— 51 — 55... 3 — 1840
— 56 — 58... 4 — (a) 1841

(FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 59 .... 4 VICTORIA (b) 1841
— 60 to 65... 5 — 1842
— 66 — 71... 6 — 1843
— 72 — 76... 7 — 1844
— 77 — 82... 8 — 1845
— 83 — 88... 9 — 1846
— 89 — 94...10 — (a) 1847

(FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 95 ... .10 VICTORIA (b) 1847
— 96 to 101...11 — 1848
— 102 —107...12 — 1849
— 108 —113...13 — 1850
— 114 —118...14 — 1851
— 119 —122...15 — (a) 1852

(SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 123 ....15 VICTORIA (b) 1852
— 124 to 129...16 — 1853
— 130 —135...17 — 1854
— 136 —139...18 — 1855
— 140 —143...19 — 1856
— 144 ....20 — (a) 1857

(SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 145 to 147...20 VICTORIA (b) 1857
— 148 —151...21 — 1858
— 152 —153...22 — (a) 1859

(EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 154 to 155...22 VICTORIA (b) 1859
— 156 —160...23 — 1860
— 161 —164...24 — 1861
— 165 —168...25 — 1862
— 169 —172...26 — 1863
— 173 —176...27 — 1864
— 177 —180...28 — 1865

(NINETEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 181 to 184...29 VICTORIA...... 1866
— 185 —189...30 — 1867
— 190 —193...31 — ... 1867-8

(TWENTIETH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 194 to 198...32 VICTORIA ... 1868-9
— 199 —203...33 — 1870
— 204 —208...34 — 1871
— 209 —213...35 — 1872
— 214 —217...36 — 1873

(TWENTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 218 to 221...37 VICTORIA 1874
— 222 —226...38 — 1875
— 227 —231...39 — 1876
— 232 —236...40 — 1877
— 237 —242...41 — 1878
— 243 —249...42 — ... 1878-9
— 250 & 251...43 — (a) 1880

(TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 252 to 256...43 VICTORIA (b) 1880
— 257 —265...44 — 1881
— 266 —273...45 — (a) 1882
— 274 & 275...45 — (b) 1882
— 276 to 283...46 — 1883
— 284 —292...47 — 1884
— 293 —301...48 — ... 1884-5

(TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 302 to 307...49 VICTORIA (a) 1886

(TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 308 & 309...49 VICTORIA (b) 1886
— 310 to 321...50 — 1887
— 322 —332...51 — 1888
— 333 —340...52 — 1889
— 341 —348...53 — 1890
— 349 —356...54 — ... 1890-1

Fourth Series.

(TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT—*cont.*)

Vol. 1 to 6...55 VICTORIA 1892

(TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 7 ....56 VICTORIA 1892
— 8 to 21...57 — ... 1893-4
— 22 — 29...57 — 1894
— 30 — 35...58 — 1895

(TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 36 ....59 VICTORIA 1895
— 37 to 44...59 — ... 1895-6
— 45 — 52...60 — 1897
— 53 — 65...61 — 1898
— 66 — 76...62 — 1899
— 77 ....63 — 1899
— 78 — 83...63 — 1900
— 84 ... 63 & 64 — 1900
— 85 — 87...64 — 1900

(TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 88 ....64 VICTORIA 1900

REIGN OF EDWARD VII.

(TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT—*cont.*)

Vol. 89 .... 1 EDWARD VII....1901
— 90 to 100 1 — ...1901
— 101 ... 1 & 2 — ...1902
— 102 to 117 2 — ...1902
— 118 to 121 3 — ...1903

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE, Etc.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury and Lord Privy Seal——Rt. Hon. Arthur Balfour.
Lord President of the Council——His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, K.G.
Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Earl of Halsbury.
Secretaries of State——
  Foreign Affairs——Most Hon. the Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G.
  Home Department——Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Douglas, M.P.
  Colonial——Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.
  War——Rt. Hon. W. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
  India——Rt. Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P.
Chancellor of the Exchequer——Rt. Hon. Chas. T. Ritchie, M.P.
First Lord of the Admiralty——Rt. Hon. the Earl of Selborne.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland——Rt. Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
President of the Board of Trade——Rt. Hon. Gerald W. Balfour, M.P.
Postmaster-General——Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain, Esq., M.P.
Secretary for Scotland——Rt. Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh.
President of the Local Government Board——Rt. Hon. Walter H. Long, M.P.
President of the Board of Agriculture——
President of the Board of Education——The Most Noble the Marquess of Londonderry.
Chief Secretary for Ireland——Rt. Hon. George Wyndham, M.P.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury——Sir A. Acland-Hood, Bt., M.P.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury——Hon. Arthur D. Elliot, M.P.
Secretary of the Board of Education——Sir William Anson, Bt., M.P.
Secretary to the Admiralty——Hugh O. Arnold-Forster, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Treasury——
  H. T. Anstruther, Esq., M.P.
  Hon. Ailwyn Fellowes, M.P.
  H. W. Forster, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Admiralty——
  Admiral Lord W. T. Kerr, K.C.B.
  Admiral Sir John Fisher, G.C.B.
  Rear-Admiral W. H. May, M.V.O.
  Rear-Admiral John Durnford, C.B., D.S.O.
Civil Lord of the Admiralty——E. G. Pretyman, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Office——Lord Cranborne, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Home Office——Hon. T. H. Cochrane, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Colonial Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of Onslow, G.C.M.G.
Parliamentary Secretary, India Office——Rt. Hon. Earl Percy, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, War Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of Hardwicke.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade——A. Bonar Law, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board——J. Grant Lawson, Esq., M.P.
Financial Secretary, War Office——Lord Stanley, M.P.
Attorney-General——Sir R. B. Finlay, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor-General——Rt. Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M.P.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland——Rt. Hon. Earl of Dudley.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster——Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Walrond, Bt., M.P.
First Commissioner of Works——Rt. Hon. Lord Windsor.

OTHER OFFICERS OF STATE

Judge Advocate-General——Rt. Hon. Sir F. H. Jeune, K.C.B., President Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division.
Lord Chamberlain——Rt. Hon. Earl of Clarendon.
Vice-Chamberlain——Sir A. Acland-Hood, Bt., M.P.
Lord Steward——Rt. Hon. Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, G.C.V.O.
Master of the Horse——His Grace the Duke of Portland, K.G., G.C.V.O.
Paymaster-General——His Grace the Duke of Marlborough.
Comptroller of the Household——Viscount Valentia, M.P.
Treasurer of the Household——Victor C. W. Cavendish, Esq., M.P.
Master of the Buckhounds——Right Hon. Lord Chesham.
Captain Yeomen of the Guard—Rt. Hon. Earl Waldegrave.

Lords-in-Waiting——
- Rt. Hon. Earl of Kintore, G.C.M.G.
- Rt. Hon. Earl of Denbigh.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Churchill, K.C.V.O.
- Rt. Hon. Earl Howe.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Lawrence.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Bagot.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Suffield, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Kenyon.

SCOTLAND.

Secretary for Scotland and Keeper of the Great Seal——Rt. Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh.
Lord Justice-General——Rt. Hon. J. B. Balfour.
Lord Advocate——Rt. Hon. A. Graham Murray, K.C., M.P.
Lord Justice Clerk——Rt. Hon. Lord Kinsburgh, C.B.
Lord Clerk Register——His Grace the Duke of Montrose, K.T.
Lord High Commissioner——Rt. Hon. Earl of Leven and Melville.
Solicitor-General——Charles Scott Dickson, Esq., K.C., M.P.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant——Rt. Hon. Earl of Dudley.
Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Chief Secretary——Rt. Hon. George Wyndham, M.P.
Under Secretary——Sir Antony McDonnell.
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction——President: The Rt. Hon. the Chief Secretary for Ireland; Vice-President: Rt. Hon. Horace Plunkett.
Attorney-General——Rt. Hon. J. Atkinson, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor-General——Geo. Wright, Esq., K.C.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Chairman of Committees——Rt. Hon. Earl of Morley.
Clerk of Parliaments——Sir Henry J. L. Graham, K.C.B.
Deputy Clerk of Parliaments (Clerk Assistant)——Hon. E. P. Thesiger, C.B.
Reading-Clerk and Clerk of Outdoor Committees——Edward Hall Alderson, Esq.
Counsel to the Chairman of Committees——Albert Gray, Esq.
Chief Clerk and Clerk of Public Bills——A. Harrison, Esq.
Senior Clerks——
- Peers' Printed Paper Office——C. L. Anstruther, Esq.
- Principal Clerk, Judicial Department, and Taxing Officer of Judicial Costs——J. F. Skene, Esq.
- Clerk of the Journals——W. A. Leigh, Esq.
- Principal Clerk of Private Committees——J. F. Symons Jeune, Esq.

Other Clerks——W. H. Hamilton Gordon, Esq.; Hon. A. McDonnell; A. H. Robinson, Esq. (Clerk of Private Bills); H. P. St. John, Esq.; V. M. Biddulph, Esq.; Hon. E. A. Stonor; H. J. F. Badeley, Esq.; C. Headlam, Esq.; J. B. Hotham, Esq.; E. C. Vigors, Esq.; A. Tennyson, Esq.; and G. D. Luard, Esq.
Accountant and Copyist——Mr. T. A. Court.
Assistant Copyists——Mr. H. P. Norris and Mr. R. A. Court.
Messengers——Messrs. A. A. Worfell, C. E. Chizlett, A. M. Stoll, J. W. F. Locke, J. McMillan, G. Bennett, G. T. Philip.
Librarian——S. Arthur Strong, Esq.
Assistant Librarian——A. H. M. Butler, Esq.
Attendant——Mr. W. Worfell.
Examiners for Standing Orders——C. W. Campion, Esq.; J. F. Symons Jeune, Esq.; Clerk ——B. H. Fell, Esq.
Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod——Gen. Sir Michael A. S. Biddulph, G.C.B.
Yeoman Usher——Captain T. D. Butler.
Serjeant-at-Arms——Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir Fleetwood I. Edwards, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms——S. Hand, Esq.
Resident Superintendent——J. K. Williams, Esq.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS—(*Cont.*)

Shorthand Writer——W. H. GURNEY SALTER, Esq.
Principal Doorkeepers——Messrs. W. CHANDLER, E. FOX, F. HOLMAN.
First Class Assistants——Messrs. C. WALKER, J. HEDLEY, J. LANE.
Second Class Assistants——Messrs. B. GALLOP, H. B. STREVENS, G. W. CROSS, W. STOPP.
Third Class Assistants——Messrs. J. WOOLACOTT, A. A. EDNEY, J. F. BAUM.
Messengers——Messrs. A. J. SOLMAN, J. B. FORSYTH, C. CHAPMAN, W. PHILLIPS, W. W. MEATES.
Superintendent of Refreshment Rooms——Mr. W. CASBON.
Inspector of Police attending the House of Lords——Mr. T. KENDRICK.
Clerk of the Works, Houses of Parliament——Mr. C. J. WILLIAMS.
Resident Engineer, Houses of Parliament——Mr. A. P. PATEY.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Clerk of the House of Commons——Sir COURTNEY PEREGRINE ILBERT, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.
Clerk-Assistant——ARTHUR W. NICHOLSON, Esq.
Second Clerk-Assistant——T. L. WEBSTER, Esq.
Principal Clerks——
    Public Bill Office, and Clerk of Fees——W. GIBBONS, Esq.
    Clerk of the Journals——W. H. LEY, Esq.
    Committee Office——R. DICKINSON, Esq.
    Private Bill Office——J. H. W. SOMERSET, Esq.
Senior Clerks——F. ST. GEORGE TUPPER, Esq.; H. C. TOWER, Esq.; C. V. FRERE, Esq.; L. T. LE MARCHANT, Esq.; G. C. GIFFARD, Esq.; Sir E. H. DOYLE, Bart.
Assistant Clerks——S. L. SIMEON, Esq.; ARTHUR I. DASENT, Esq.; E. C. HOWE BROWNE, Esq.; HORACE WEST, Esq.; HENRY A. FERGUSON-DAVIE, Esq.; ARTHUR H. ELLIS, Esq.; PERCY A. BULL, Esq.; F. R. WILLIAMS WYNN, Esq.; W. E. GREY, Esq.; F. C. HOLLAND, Esq.; J. W. G. BOND, Esq.
Junior Clerks——H. C. DAWKINS, Esq.; R. P. COLOMB, Esq.; B. H. FELL, Esq.; R. E. CHILDERS, Esq.; J. SCOTT PORTER, Esq.; F. C. BRAMWELL, Esq.; W. T. LEGGE, Esq.; C. R. TURNER, Esq.; W. K. GIBBONS, Esq.; A. E. A. W. SMYTH, Esq.; K. J. C. MOORSOM, Esq.; C. D. ROBERTSON, Esq.; R. D. RADCLIFFE, Esq.
Serjeant-at-Arms——H. D. ERSKINE, Esq.
Deputy Serjeant——F. R. GOSSET, Esq.
Assistant Sergeant——W. H. ERSKINE, Esq.
Chaplain to the House——Rev. Archdeacon BASIL WILBERFORCE, D.D.
Secretary to the Speaker——EDWARD GULLY, Esq.
Counsel to the Speaker——Hon. Sir E. CHANDOS LEIGH, K.C., K.C.B.
Trainbearer——Mr. J. FRENCH.
Messenger——Mr. W. MURRELL.
Collectors of Fees on Private Bills——C. L. LOCKTON, Esq.
Referee of Private Bills——ALFRED BONHAM CARTER, Esq., C.B.
Examiners of Private Bills——C. W. CAMPION, Esq.; J. F. SYMONS JEUNE, Esq.
Taxing Master——C. W. CAMPION, Esq.; Clerk——B. H. FELL, Esq.
Vote Office——
    Chief Clerk——H. A. M. KILLICK, Esq.
    Assistant Clerks——PHILIP SMITH, Esq.; H. OTWAY MAYNE, Esq.
    Messenger——Mr. JOHN EDWARDS.
Librarian——R. C. WALPOLE, Esq.; Assistant Librarian——TEMPLE FRANCKS, Esq., B.C.L.; Clerks in Library——Messrs. J. R. CRIMP, WM. STEWART; Messengers——Messrs. A. FIRMIN, W. HAGUE.
Shorthand Writer——W. H. GURNEY SALTER, Esq.
Printers——
    Journals——G. E. BRISCOE EYRE, Esq.
    Votes——J. B. NICHOLS, Esq.
Postmaster——Mr. EDMUND W. PIKE; Hall Keeper——Mr. J. GLYNN.
Office Keeper——Mr. W. HARVEY.
Office Clerk in Committee Office——Mr. T. FIELDEN MITCHELL.
Office Clerk in Journal Office——Mr. A. A. TAYLOR.
Messengers——Messrs. J. J. SHELVEY, C. DAVIE, W. QUANTRILL, H. JONES, G. D. WELLER, J. ARMSTRONG, J. WOODWARD, J. IVORY, G. NORMAN.
Doorkeepers——Mr. W. WILSON and Mr. M. INGLEFIELD.
Office Messenger——Mr. C. J. H. SHEARN.
Messengers (1st Class)——Mr. H. HAMBLING, Mr. C. WOODCRAFT, Mr. R. ROBERTSON, Mr. J. HILLS, Mr. J. SPRAGUE, Mr. A. ANDREWS, Mr. T. B. SPRAY, Mr. G. TYE, Mr. F. HOBBY, Mr. G. ANSTEY, Mr. J. H. DAY.
Messengers (2nd Class)——Messrs. J. HENDERSON, G. WAINWRIGHT, J. GUYATT, R. TURTLE, A. HASKELL, A. C. JOHNSON, G. CLAPPERTON, H. E. LININGTON.
Superintendent of Members' Waiting Room——Mr. J. F. HENLEY; Assistant——Mr. W. BROADBENT; Porters——Messrs. J. ORAM and T. MARTIN.
Chief Inspector of Police attending the House of Commons——Mr. SCANTLEBURY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME CXXI.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION, 1903.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 21st APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Page

Broadstairs Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill.—Verbal Amendment made; Bill read the third time, and passed 1

Great Northern and City Railway Bill; Ipswich Gas Bill; Market Drayton Gas Bill; Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill; Sutton District Water Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1

London Hydraulic Power Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1

Maidstone Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1

Midland Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1

Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway (No. 1) Bill (by Order); Central London Railway Bill (by Order); Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions) Bill (by Order); Metropolitan District Railway (Works) Bill (by Order); North West London Railway Bill (by Order).—Orders for Second Reading read and discharged; Bills withdrawn... 2

London County Council (Money).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cohen and Mr. John Burns 2

Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill.—Petition for additional provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 2

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines Regulation Bill.—Petitions in favour: from Moresby; Oatlands; Harrington; and Allhallows Collieries; to lie upon the Table 2

Apr. 21.]

Page

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Warrington; Hartlepool: Leicester; Loughborough; Yeovil; Blackpool; Stalybridge; and Burslem; to lie upon the Table 3

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Tillicoultry; Ayr; Ruthven; and Mains; to lie upon the Table 3

EDUCATION CODE (SCOTLAND), 1903.—Petition from Edinburgh, for alteration of Article 13; to lie upon the Table 3

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Dundee; Muirkirk; Logie; and Kettine; to lie upon the Table 3

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Glasgow (four); Edinburgh; Leith; Greenock (two); and Dundee (eleven); to lie upon the Table 3

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions for alteration of law: from Hindley; and Stalybridge; to lie upon the Table 3

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from Tisbury, against; to lie upon the Table 3

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.—Petition from Greenock, against establishment; to lie upon the Table... 3

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against: from Ramsgate; and Grimsby; to lie upon the Table 3

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Oatlands; Harrington; Moresby; and Allhallows Collieries; to lie upon the Table 3

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).—Copy of Thirteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland 4

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.—Copy of Report for the year 1901 4

TREATY SERIES (No. 5, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Denmark for regulating the fisheries outside territorial waters in the ocean surrounding Faroe Islands and Iceland. Signed at London, 24th June, 1901. Ratifications exchanged at London, 28th May, 1902 4

EGYPT (No. 1, 1902).—Copy of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1902.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 4

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2952 to 2958 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 4

Apr. 21.] *Page*

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of February, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 4

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) (NUNS EMPLOYED).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; *Mr. Sloan*]; to lie upon the Table ... 5

ARMY (MARTIAL LAW IN SOUTH AFRICA).—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Administration of Martial Law in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

SOUTH AFRICA.—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Progress of Administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

SOUTH AFRICA.—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Finances of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the year ended December 31st, 1902, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

TRADE REPORTS.—Copy presented, of Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on Trade and Subjects of General Interest (with Appendix), 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 25th February; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.] 6

SEA FISHERIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1902.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 8th April; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.] 6

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University for the year ended September 30th, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.] 6

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews for the year 1901-2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.] ... 6

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ENGLISH, SCOTCH AND IRISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPERIAL REVENUE.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 6

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT—EXCHEQUER GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Ritchie 7

Apr. 21.]

Page

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

OLD BATTLESHIPS AS FLOATING FORTS.—Question, Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 7

VENEZUELAN ARBITRATION.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 7

WEST INDIAN SUGAR INDUSTRIES.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 8

NEW SOUTH WALES AND THE SUGAR REBATE.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 9

THE BAGDAD RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)... 9

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-1904—CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,600, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness-shire*)... 10

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. John Dewar.*)

Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (*Huntingdonshire, Ramsey*) 10
Mr. Thomas Shaw (*Hawick Burghs*) 11
Mr. John Wilson (*Falkirk Burghs*) 12
The Solicitor-General for Scotland (*Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton*) 12
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 14
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 15
Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) 15
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 16
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 16
Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 18
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 19

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 61; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 61.)

[Apr. 21.] Page

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 21
Mr. John Burns (Battersea). 21
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 24
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 25
Mr. Gibson Bowles 26

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £20,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 27
Mr. Caldwell 27
Mr. Kearley 27
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 28
Mr. Whitley 28
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 29
Mr. Powell-Williams (Birmingham, S.) 29
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 30

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 70 ; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 62.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £51,400, to complete the sum for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.

Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 31
Mr. Skewes-Cox (Surrey, Kingston) 33
Mr. Bell (Derby) 33
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 34

Vote agreed to.

3. £27,700, to complete the sum for Houses of Parliament Buildings.

Mr. Powell-Williams 35
Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth)... 35
Mr. Cumming Macdona (Southwark, Rotherhithe) 36
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.)... 36
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 36
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 37
Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) 37
Dr. Farquharson 38
Dr. Hutchinson (Sussex, Rye) 38
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 38
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 39

Vote agreed to.

4. £36,120, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain.

5. £30,150, to complete the sum for Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain.

6. £37,500, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

Mr. Gibson Bowles 40
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 41

Apr. 21.] Page

Mr. Whitley 41
General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) 41
Mr. Whitley 41

Vote agreed to.

7. £339,000, to complete the sum for Revenue Buildings.

Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 42
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 42

Vote agreed to.

8. £222,000, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

Mr. Whitley 42

Vote agreed to.

9. £119,019, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.

10. £14,204, to complete the sum for Harbours under the Board of Trade.

11. £17,980, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

CLASS II.—12. Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £48,288, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and for Kew Botanic and Pleasure Gardens, including certain Grant-in-Aid."

Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.) 43
Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton) 45
Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford) 49
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock)... 50
Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding) 51

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the salary of the President of the Board of Agriculture." —(*Mr. Mansfield.*)

Mr. Lloyd Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.) 53
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 53
Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.) 55
Mr. Brigg 56
Dr. Hutchinson 57
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) 58
The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) ... 58

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,333, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for stationery, printing, paper, binding, and printed books for the public service; to pay the salaries and expenses of the Stationery Office; and for sundry miscellaneous services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 68

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £381,233, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 69
Mr. Brigg 69
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Elliot, Durham*) 69

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Great Western Railway Bill.—[By Order.]—[Second Reading.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 71

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Dickinson (*Somersetshire, Wells*) 76
Mr. Llewellyn (*Somersetshire, N.*) 77
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (*Wiltshire, Cricklade*)... 81
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 82

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill.—Committed.

Supply [6th allotted day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1903-4.—Class II.

I. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £381,333, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the

Apr. 21.] *Page*

year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for stationery, printing, paper, binding, and printed books for the public service; to pay the salaries and expenses of the Stationery Office; and for sundry Miscellaneous Services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) 84
Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 84

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,233, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Elliot, Durham) 85
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 87

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 55; Noes, 109. (Division List No. 63.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 89

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,133, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Mr. Elliot 91
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 92
Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 93
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) 94
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) 94

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 58; Noes, 112. (Division List No. 64.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,264, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under the Light Railways Act, 1896."

Mr. Dalziel 97
Mr. Claude Hay 97
Mr. Dewar (Inverness-shire) 98

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,164, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Dewar.*)

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 98
Mr. Elliot 99
Mr. Claude Hay 99
Mr. Whitley 100
Mr. Dalziel 101
Mr. Claude Hay 102

Question put.

Committee divided :—Ayes, 49 ; Noes, 115. (Division List No. 65.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 22ND APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London County Council (Money) Bill.—"To regulate the expenditure of money by the London County Council on Capital Account during the current financial period, and the raising of money to meet such expenditure," read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 105

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State under the Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, relating to land in the Royal Borough of Kensington, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas 105

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under the Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, relating to land in the Royal Borough of Kensington," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 158.] 105

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Birley (No. 1); Wharton Hall; Batley (No. 1); Markham; Dunston; Killamarsh; Blackrod; Dearham; Seaton Moor; Clifton; Watergate; Ellenborough; Buckhill; St. Helens; Robin Hood; Bulgill; Lanarkshire; Kilburn; Millbridge; Liversedge; Camerton; and, Pilsey Collieries; to lie upon the Table 105

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Sheffield; Worthing; Clitheroe; Keighley; Dunstable; Poole; Hove; Longton; and Margate; to lie upon the Table 105

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Mauchline; Dunfermline; and Fodderty; to lie upon the Table 106

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table... 106

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petition from Sunderland, against; to lie upon the Table 106

Apr. 22.] Page

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Stranraer; and Forres; to lie upon the Table… … … … 106

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table … … … … … … 106

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh against; to lie upon the Table … … … … … … 106

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Bridgeton; Glasgow (four); Dundee (two); and Edinburgh (three); to lie upon the Table … … … … … … … … 106

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions for alteration of law: from Evesham; Burton-upon-Trent; Stockport; Padiham; and Longton; to lie upon the Table… 106

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from Worcester, against; to lie upon the Table … … … … … … … … … 106

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.—Petition from Dunfermline, against establishment; to lie upon the Table … … … … 106

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against: from Redditch; Soho; and Margate; to lie upon the Table … … … … … 107

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Hungerford; and Vernham's Dean; to lie upon the Table … … … 107

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Birley No. 1; Wharton Hall; Soothill Wood; Batley No. 1; Markham; Dunston; Killamarsh; Blackrod; St. Helens; Dearham; Seaton Moor; Clifton; Watergate; Ellenborough; Buckhill; Robin Hood; Bulgill: Lanarkshire; Kilburn; Millbridge; Liversedge; Camerton; and Pilsey Collieries; to lie upon the Table … … … … … … … … … … 107

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES (REMOVAL) BILL.—Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table … … … … … … … … 107

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT) (CHANGES IN WAGES, ETC.)—Copy presented, of Report on Changes in Rates of Wages and Hours of Labour in the United Kingdom, 1902, with Comparative Statistics for 1893–1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table … … … … … 107

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.—Copy ordered "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) … … 107

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—Copy ordered "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) … … … … … … … 107

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.—Copy ordered "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law*) … … … … … … … 107

Page

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cost of Military Operations in Somaliland.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Lord Cranborne 108

State Forests.—Question, Sir Andrew Agnew (Edinburgh, S.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 108

Boarded-out Children.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 109

Status of Storehouse Men in Dockyards.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 109

Translation of Ancient Irish Manuscripts.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot 109

Irish Education—Salary of Assistant Teacher at Kilkitt.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 110

Training of Louth Militia.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. Brodrick... 111

Reports on Nigeria—Delay in Publication.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 111

ivil Service Estimates—Class 7, Vote 2.—Question, Mr. Fitzroy (Northamptonshire, S.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 111

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

1st Vol. Batt. Seaforth Highlanders.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 111

Workmen's Compensation Act—Medical Referees.—Question, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough); Answer, The Under Secretary to the Home Office (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.)... ... 112

Sugar, Coal and Corn Duties.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Elliot, Durham) ... 112

Brussels Sugar Convention.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Mr. Elliot ... 113

Holyrood Palace.—Question, Sir J. Stirling Maxwell (Glasgow College); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 113

The Bagdad Railway.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Sir A. Acland-Hood (Somersetshire, Wellington) 114

Business of the House.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Lough, Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet), and Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answers, Sir A. Acland-Hood 114

Selection (Standing Committees).—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection, that they discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure: Mr. Attorney-General; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Solicitor-General.

Apr. 22.] Page

Report to lie upon the Table 116

Public Accounts Committee.—Ordered that Mr. Hayes Fisher be discharged, and that Mr. Arthur Elliot be added to the Committee.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*) 116

Supply.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1903-4.—Class II.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £139,395 be granted to His Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments, including a Grant in Aid."

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 116

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 118
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 121
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 130
Mr. Channing (*Northampton, E.*) 133
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central*) 136
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 143
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 150
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 151
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 154
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 159
Mr. Louis Sinclair (*Essex, Romford*) 160
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 162
Mr. Gerald Balfour 165
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 168
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 168
Mr. Gerald Balfour 169
Colonel Ropner (*Stockton*) 170
Mr. Cawley (*Lancashire, Prestwich*) 171
Mr. Helme (*Lancashire, Lancaster*) 171
Mr. Harwood (*Bolton*) 172
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 173
Mr. Gerald Balfour 174
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 174
Mr. Gibson Bowles 175
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 176
Mr. Dalziel 177

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Mr. Gerald Balfour 178

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 90 ; Noes, 206. (Division List No. 66.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 181
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 183
Sir William Allan (Gateshead) 184
Mr. Gerald Balfour 184

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £200, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade."—(*Mr. Soares.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 67 ; Noes, 167. (Division List No. 67.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

SCOTTISH FISHERIES.

Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney & Shetland.) 189
Mr. Black (Banffshire.) 192

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in the opinion of this House the protection afforded by the Government to the fishing interests round the coasts of Scotland is entirely inadequate."—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 195
Mr. Bignold (Wick Burghs) 196
Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire) 198
The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 199
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) 203

Motion by leave, withdrawn.

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.

Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Law, etc., that they have power to extend the provisions of the County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill to Scotland."—*Mr. Caldwell.*

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Law, etc., that they have power to extend the Bill to Scotland.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 204

Addenbrooke's Hospital Bill.—[SECOND READING.]

Sir Richard Jebb (Cambridge University) 204

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present,

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 23RD APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PORT OF LONDON BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 7th day of April, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Port of London Bill 205

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petitions for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 205

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 205

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 205

Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) Bill.—Ordered, that the Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) Bill be re-committed to the former Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) (re-committed) Bill and the Great Eastern Railway (No. 2) Bill that they have power, if they think fit, to consolidate the said two Bills, or any part or parts thereof respectively, into one Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have leave to proceed with the said Bills to-morrow.—(*Mr. Ernest Gray*) 206

Apr. 23.]

Page

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Borrowstounness, Cambuslang, Irvine, Kilmalcolm, and Kirkintilloch, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour 206

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abersychan, Calverley, Falmouth, Horsforth, Launceston, Maesteg, Walton-upon-Thames, Warmley, Whickham, and Wigan (Rural), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour 206

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bexley (Extension), Bridgwater and District, Bromley (Rural), Hendon (Amendment), Huddersfield (Extension), Leatherhead and District (Extension), Prestwich (Amendment), Stroud, and Whitchurch and Pangbourne, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour 206

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Borrowstounness, Cambuslang, Irvine, Kilmalcolm, and Kirkintilloch," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 159.] 207

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade and The Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abersychan, Calverley, Falmouth, Horsforth, Launceston, Maesteg, Walton-upon-Thames, Warmley, Whickham and Wigan (Rural)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 160.] 207

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bexley (Extension), Bridgwater and District, Bromley (Rural), Hendon (Amendment), Huddersfield (Extension), Leatherhead and District (Extension), Prestwich (Amendment), Stroud, and Whitchurch and Pangbourne," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161.] 207

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Low Stubbin (No. 2); Whitehaven; Braysdown Pit; Camerton Pit; Kilmersdon Pit; Bishop Sutton Pit; Upper Conygre Pit; Huish Pit; Foxcote Pit; Writhlington Pit; Ludlow's Pit; Norton Hill; and Lower Conygre Collieries; to lie upon the Table 207

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Reading; Bournemouth (two); Dover; Harrogate; Torquay; Pudsey; Middleton; Eastbourne; Ilford; Leytonstone; Forest Gate; Weston-super-Mare; Barnsley; Bridgwater; Brighton; Sunderland; Mossley; and Kingston-upon-Hull; to lie upon the Table 208

Apr. 23.] *Page*

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Stenton; Bellie; and Girvan; to lie upon the Table 208

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 208

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Leeds, in favour; to lie upon the Table 208

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Borrowstounness, for alteration: to lie upon the Table 208

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 208

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petition from Bristol, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 208

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Paisley (four); Edinburgh (four); Glasgow; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table 208

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petition from Oldham, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 208

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petitions against: from Newhaven; and Brighton; to lie upon the Table 208

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against: from Brighton (two); and Hove; to lie upon the Table 208

TRADES' DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Whitehaven; Low Stubbin (No. 2); Braysdown Pit; Upper Conygre; Ludlow's Pit; Writhlington Pit; Norton Hill Pit; Foxcote Pit; Lower Conygre; Kilmersdon Pit; Huish Pit; Camerton Pit; and Bishop Sutton Pit Collieries; to lie upon the Table 209

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) (NUNS EMPLOYED).—Return [presented 21st April] to be printed. [No. 115] 209

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 209

FORESTRY (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to enquire into and report upon British Forestry, with Appendices and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 209

BOARD OF EDUCATION (EDUCATION COMMITTEES).—Copy presented, of Statement of Schemes for the formation of Education Committees approved up to 31st March by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 209

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116] 209

Apr. 23.] *Page*

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—Return presented relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117]... 209

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118]... 210

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2959 and 2960 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 210

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS.—Copy presented, of Scheme for the Management of Chew's Foundation, in the parish of Dunstable, in the County of Bedford, founded by Deed of 16th September 1724 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121] 210

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1903-4).—Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119] 210

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SCOTCH EDUCATION—LEAVING CERTIFICATES.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 210

LONDON EDUCATION BILL—DATE OF SECOND READING.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards (Finsbury, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 211

PLUMBERS AND ELECTRICIANS IN THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 211

SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT AND THE TELEPHONE SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 211

IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 212

DEPOPULATION OF IRELAND.—Question, Capt. Donelan (Cork Co., E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 212

BAGHDAD RAILWAY CONVENTION—ARTICLE IV.—Question, Sir Joseph Leese (Lancashire, Accrington); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 213

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

NAVAL MARKSMANSHIP.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) ... 213

THE DISASTER IN SOMALILAND.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 215

THE MILITARY RIOT AT PRETORIA.—Question, Col. Nolan (Galway, N.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 217

Apr. 23.] *Page*

MADRAS LAW STUDENTS.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 217

DELHI RAILWAY CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 217

LORD AMPTHILL AND IMPUTATIONS ON INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 218

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 219

NATIVE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 219

THE BAGHDAD RAILWAY.—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 220

THE PASSIONIST FATHERS.—Question, Col. Nolan; Answer, Lord Cranborne... 223

SHIPPING LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. Harris (Tynemouth); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central) ... 223

BARNSTAPLE RURAL POSTMAN.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 223

KILADYSERT POLICE AND THE PRESS.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 224

EVICTIONS ON THE BERRIDGE ESTATE.—Question, Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 224

ROSSCARBERY MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry (Cork County, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 225

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY FOR IRELAND AND THE IRISH LAND BILL.—Question, Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour... 225

THE LONDON EDUCATION BILL.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 226

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Baronet, for the County of Cornwall (North Western or Camborne Division) 226

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120.]

Minutes of Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 120.]

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 162.] 226

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Borough Funds Bill:—Mr. Brigg, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Shepherd Cross, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Joseph Howard, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Peel, Colonel Sackville, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham).

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Sheep Scab Bill:—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Chaplin, Earl of Dalkeith, Sir Michael Foster, Sir Robert Gunter, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Price, Mr. Soares, Mr. Spear, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, and Mr. Warner.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Local Government (Transfer of Powers) Bill:—Mr. Brigg, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Shepherd Cross, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Joseph Howard, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Peel, Colonel Sackville, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham).

Reports to lie upon the Table 227

NEW BILLS.

Home Industries Bill.—"For the better regulation of Home Industries," presented by Colonel Denny; supported by Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. John Burns, Mr. J. W. Wilson, Mr. Emmott, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday 17th July, and to be printed. [Bill 163.] ... 227

Education (Borrowing) Bill.—"To provide for the borrowing by Local Education Authorities for certain purposes," presented by Mr. Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 164.] 228

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).—Ordered, that the Committee of Ways and Means have precedence of the Business of Supply this day, and that the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House).—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) 228

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 228

Apr. 23.] *Page*

CUSTOMS—TEA.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Customs duty now charged on tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say) :—

Tea . . . the pound Sixpence."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Sir Wm. Harcourt (*Monmouthshire, W.*) 258
Mr. White Ridley (*Stalybridge*) 268
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 271
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 275
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 278
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 283
Sir William Holland (*Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*) 286
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 290
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 296
Mr. Fitzalan Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 299
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 303

And it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress.

To sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CUSTOMS—TEA.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Customs duty now charged on tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say): Tea...the pound, Sixpence."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. Emmott 305
Sir Albert Rollitt (*Islington, S.*) 308
Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 312
Mr. John Wilson (*Falkirk Burghs*) 319
Mr. Toulmin (*Lancashire, Bury*) 321
Mr. Lees Knowles (*Salford, W.*) 325
Mr. Robson (*South Shields*) 328
Major Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 335
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 336
Mr. Ritchie... 338
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 345

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Six,' and insert the word 'Four.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question put, "That the word 'Six' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 184; Noes, 76. (Division List No. 68.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased Duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, 1904."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman	351
Mr. Ritchie	351
Sir William Harcourt	351
Mr. Lough	352

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS)—Return ordered, "of all Inclosure Awards or Copies of Inclosure Awards which are at the present time deposited or enrolled with the Clerks of the Peace or of the Councils of the Counties of England and Wales, setting out alphabetically under the head of each county the name of each Common affected by an Award, the parish or township in which each such Common was situated, and stating the date of the Act of Parliament authorising the Inclosure and the date of the Award."—(*Sir John Brunner.*) 352

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, FRIDAY, 24TH APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.—

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered that the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next 353

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE). — Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next 353

Apr. 24.] Page

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with :—

Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill.

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 353

London Hydraulic Power Bill.—Maidstone Gas Bill ; Midland Railway Bill Read the third time, and passed 353

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill.—As amended, considered ; A Clause added ; Amendments made ; Bill to be read the third time 353

City and South London Railway Bill.—As amended, considered ; A Clause added ; Amendments made : Bill to be read the third time... 354

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill. — Read a second time, and committed 354

Romford and District Tramways Bill.—Petition for additional Provision ; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 354

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).—Ordered, That Professor Vivian Lewes and Dr. Clowes do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills on Tuesday next, at half-past eleven o'clock 354

Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) (Re-Committed) Bill and Great Eastern Railway (No. 2) Bill (Consolidated into the "Great Eastern Railway Bill")—Reported, with Amendments : Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 354

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour ; from Kippax ; Glass Houghton ; Featherstone Main ; Donisthorpe ; Church Gresley ; Halls ; Cartwright ; Cudley Hill ; and, Atherton Collieries ; to lie upon the Table 354

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour : from Plymouth ; Oswestry ; Ealing ; Stratford-upon-Avon ; Scarborough ; and, Leamington Spa : to lie upon the Table 354

DESTITUTE ADULT BLIND.—Petition from Leith, for legislation ; to lie upon the Table 355

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions from Fraserburgh, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 355

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from the Royal, Parliamentary, and Police Burghs in Scotland, for alteration ; to lie upon the Table ... 355

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 355

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, against : to lie upon the Table 355

Apr. 24.] *Page*

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.—Petition of the Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 355

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, against: to lie upon the Table 355

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petitions against: from Banbury; Plymouth (two); and, Southampton; to lie upon the Table 355

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from North Berwick; Kilmarnock; Crail; and, Eassie; to lie upon the Table ... 355

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Glasgow; and, Kilmarnock; to lie upon the Table 355

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Oban, in favour; to lie upon the Table 355

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 355

PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.—Petition of the Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 356

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Paisley; Possilpark; Granton; Leith (three); Glasgow; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table 356

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions for alteration of law: from Stretford; Exeter; Leamington Spa; Brierley Hill; Sittingbourne; and, Kilmarnock; to lie upon the Table 356

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from East Ashford, against; to lie upon the Table 356

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.—Petitions against establishment; from Helensburg; and, Alexandria; to lie upon the Table 356

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Bournemouth; and, Windsor; to lie upon the Table 356

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Hulme; and, Bradford; to lie upon the Table 356

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Kippax; Wheldale; Glass Houghton; Featherstone Main; Donisthorpe; Church Gresley; Halls; Swadlincote; Cartwright; Cadley Hill; Atherton, and Chickenley Heath Collieries; to lie upon the Table 356

VACCINATION BILL.—Petition of the Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table 356

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA (No. 2, 1903).—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the British Central Africa Protectorate for employment in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 356

Apr. 24.] Page

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).—Copy presented, of reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.] 357

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EDUCATION ACT, 1892—SCHEDULE 2 (22).—Question, Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 357

RETIRING PENSIONS OF INDIAN JUDGES.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards (Finsbury, E.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 357

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS AT ILFORD SORTING OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 358

CARRIAGE OF STORES TO SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 358

Cheap Trains Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Tuesday, 21st July, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill—[Second Reading]. —[Order for Second Reading read.]

Mr. Butcher (York) 358

Motion made, and Question proposed:—"That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Butcher.*)

Mr. Whittaker (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) 367

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Whittaker.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Cameron Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston) 382
Mr. Lloyd Wharton (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon) 385
Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W. R., Keighley) 387
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge) 389
Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cornwall, Camborne) 394
Mr. Groves (Salford, S.) 398
Dr. Hutchinson (Sussex, Rye) 402
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 403
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 410
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 417
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 420
Sir Alfred Hickman (Wolverhampton, W.) 422
Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) 423
Mr. J. W. Wilson (Worcestershire, N.) 424
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 425
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain Birmingham, W.) 425
Mr. Logan (Leicestershire, Harborough) 426

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 266; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 69.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday, 19th June.

Elementary Education Amendment Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next 432

NEW BILL.

Architects (Registration).—Bill to provide for the Registration of Architects, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atherley-Jones and Sir William Coddington 432

Architects (Registration) Bill.—"To provide for the Registration of Architects," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 18th May, and to be printed. [Bill 165.] ... 432

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area); Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) 433

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision; of the Promoters of the North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; together with the proposed Amendment annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 433

Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision; of Salford Corporation; together with the proposed clause annexed thereto; read and referred to the Examiners 433

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill.—Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General in Ireland, received, and ordered to lie on the Table ... 433

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee to consolidate the Bills into one Bill if they think fit 433

GLASGOW CORPORATION (POLICE) DRAFT PROVISIONAL ORDER.—Ordered, that the evidence taken before the Committee of this House on the Glasgow Corporation (Sewage) Bill, 1896, be referred to the Commissioners appointed under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to inquire into the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Draft Provisional Order ... 433

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 433

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments... 433

Apr. 27.] *Page*

Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.].—Committee to meet on Thursday next 433

Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next 434

Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next 434

Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 16th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next 434

South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed 434

Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 9th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed ... 434

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 9th of March last discharged, and Bill committed 434

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Wakefield and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bangor Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 434

Life Association of Scotland Bill [H.L.]; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Lima Railways Bill [H.L.]; India-rubber, Gutta-percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [H.L.]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [H.L.]; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 434

South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Denman be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Wandsworth; read, and agreed to 434

Winchester Water and Gas Bill; Market Drayton Gas Bill; Ipswich Gas Bill; Great Northern and City Railway Bill; Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill; Broadstairs Gas Bill; Bath Corporation Water Bill; Bridgwater Gas Bill; East Ardsley Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 435

Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill; Sutton District Water Bill; Midland Railway Bill; London Hydraulic Power Bill; North Middlesex Gas Bill, Maidstone Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 435

Apr. 27.]

Page

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.—Message from the Commons that they have come to the following Resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House, viz.: That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction 435

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.:

CHARITY COMMISSION.—Fiftieth Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales. (April 1.) 436

TREATY SERIES.

No. 4. (1903)—Convention between the United Kingdom and the United States of America for the adjustment of the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska. Signed at Washington, 24th January, 1903. [Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 3rd March, 1903.] (April 1.)

No. 5. (1903)—Convention between the United Kingdom and Denmark for regulating the fisheries outside territorial waters in the ocean surrounding the Faröe Islands and Iceland. Signed at London, 24th June, 1901. [Ratifications exchanged at London, 28th May, 1902.] (April 17th) 436

TRADE REPORTS.—I.: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2947. Greece (Thessaly). (April 2.)
No. 2948. Somaliland Protectorate. (April 2.)
No. 2949. France (Brest and District). (April 2.)
No. 2950. Turkey (Constantinople). (April 4.)
No. 2951. Mexico (Mexico). (April 4th.)
No. 2952. United States (Chicago). (April 20.)
No. 2953. Greece (Morea and the Provinces of Acarnania and Ætolia). (April 20.)
No. 2954. Portugal (Foreign Trade). (April 20.)
No. 2955. France (Cherbourg). (April 20.)
No. 2956. Germany (Chemnitz). (April 20.)
No. 2957. Greece (the Cyclades). (April 22.)
No. 2958. Servia. (April 22.)
No. 2959. Germany. (April 24.)
No. 2960. France (Havre). (April 24.)
II. Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on trade and subjects of general interest (with Appendix), 1902. (April 22.) 436

RUSSIA (NEW GENERAL CUSTOMS TARIFF).—Translation of the New General Customs Tariff for the European Frontiers of Russia, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs duty contained in the tariff with the rates at present in force on imports into European Russia from the United Kingdom. (April 2.) 437

POLICE (SCOTLAND).—Forty-fifth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended 31st December, 1902. (April 2.) 437

Apr 27.]

Page

LUNACY (SCOTLAND) ACT.—Forty-fifth Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. (April 4.) 437

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.—Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-fourth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland. (April 4.) 437

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Return showing—

I. The expenditure from the grant for public education in Scotland in the year 1902.

II. A list of day schools aided from parliamentary grant, with statistics relating thereto, for 1901–1902, and supplementary list of schools, &c.

III. Summarised statistics of day schools in receipt of annual grants under the Code, for the year ended 31st August, 1902. (April 4.) ... 437

EXPLOSIVES (IGNITION OF POWDER AT THE E.C. POWDER COMPANY'S FACTORY, AT STONE, NEAR DARTFORD).—Report to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain J. H. Thompson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an accident which occurred in the drying house for smokeless powder at the factory of the E.C. Powder Company, Limited, at Beacon Wood Stone, near Dartford, on the 3rd March, 1903. (April 6.)... 437

ARMY.

I. Report of Committee on expenses incurred by officers of the Army. (April 7.)

II. (Medical Department)—Report for the year 1901. (April 17.)... 437

MUNICIPAL ELECTION PETITION (BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY).—Report made by Morton William Smith, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, the Commissioner appointed for the trial of the Petition against the election of a town councillor for the Castle Fields Ward of the borough of Shrewsbury, holden on the 1st day of November, 1902. (April 7.)... 438

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Report for December, 1902. (April 7.) 438

FISHERY BOARD FOR SCOTLAND (SALMON FISHERIES).—The cause of salmon disease; a Bacteriological Investigation, by Mr. J. Hume-Patterson, of the Bacteriological Laboratory of the City of Glasgow. (April 8.) 438

EGYPT, NO. 1 (1903).—Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1902. (April 17.) 438

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).—Twenty-first Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1902—

Part I. General Report. (April 17.)

Part II. Salmon Fisheries. (April 17.) 438

NATIONAL GALLERY, &C. (SCOTLAND).—Ninth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the Commissioners and Trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, for the year end 30th September, 1902. (April 17.) 438

Apr. 27.]

Page

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).—Forty-sixth Report, for the year 1902, of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of schools and detailed reports. (April 17.) ... 438

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).—Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland. (April 17.) ... 438

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH). Thirteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland. (April 17.) 439

CYPRUS.—Report for 1901–1902. (April 20.) 439

SOUTH AFRICA.

I. Papers relating to the administration of martial law in South Africa. (In continuation of [Cd. 981].) (April 22.)

II. Papers relating to (i.) the finances of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; (ii.) the progress of administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies. (In continuation of [Cd. 1463], February, 1903.) (April 22.) 439

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Return of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the year ended 31st December, 1902, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. (April 22.) 439

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).—Return for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903. (April 22.) 439

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).—Return for the year ended 31st December, 1902. (April 22.) 439

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Return for the month of February, 1903. (April 22.) 439

WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR, BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT).—Report on changes in rates of wages and hours of labour in the United Kingdom in 1902, with comparative statistics for 1893–1901. (April 22.) 439

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Statement of schemes for the formation of education committees approved up to 31st March by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902, showing—
Name of local education authority.
Number of members of the council of the local education authority.
Number of members of the Education Committee.
Number of members of the Education Committee who are necessarily members of the Council.
Number of women who are necessarily on the Education Committee.
Forms of educational experience to be represented on the Education Committee.
Recommendations or nominations (if any). (April 24.) 440

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES).—Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the the quarter ended 31st March, 1903. (April 24.) 440

Apr. 27.]

Page

COMMITTEE ON BRITISH FORESTRY.—Minutes of evidence taken before the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the report upon British Forestry; with appendices and index. (April 24.) 440

AFRICA, NO. 2 (1903).—Correspondence relating to the recruitment of labour in the British Central Africa Protectorate for employment in the Transvaal. (April 25.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 440

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.—Fifth Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland 440

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).—Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903 440

SOUTH AFRICA.—Further papers relating to the progress of administration in the Transvaal (in continuation of [Cd. 1551], April, 1903) 441

QUEENSLAND.—Correspondence relating to the Pacific Island Labourers' Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia (in continuation of [Cd. 1285], 1902) 441

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.—

No. 2961. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).
No. 2962. Turkey (Palestine).
No. 2963. Nicaragua.
Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie upon the Table 441

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.—

I. Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of the Act, for the year 1901–1902.

II. Annual report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrews, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act 441

COURT OF SESSION (SCOTLAND).—Act of Sederunt anent regulating the places in counties in Scotland at which commissary business shall be conducted... 441

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1902, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date 441

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.—Statements of accounts and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade under Section 10 of the "Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870," during the year ended 31st December, 1902 441

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).—Reports of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, for the year ended 29th September, 1902 441

INDIA.—Return of all loans raised in England, under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st of March, 1903, and the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, etc. 442

Apr. 27.]

Page

CREMATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 7 of the Cremation Act, 1902, with reference to the maintenance and inspection of crematoria, the conditions under which cremations may take place, etc. 442

CERTIFIED DAY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (PARLIAMENTARY GRANT).—Recommendation of the Secretary of State for the Home Department that the sum contributed out of moneys provided by Parliament to managers of any certified day industrial school shall, under certain conditions, continue to be paid in respect of children absent owing to an epidemic... 442

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.—Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27th and 28th Victoria, chap. 43, 45th and 46th Victoria, chap. 51, and 50th and 51st Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended 31st December, 1902 442

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.—Account up to 31st March, 1903 ... 442

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.—Account up to 31st March, 1903 442

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury minutes dated—

I. 26th March, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of Naval Education, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the public service are required.

II. 27th March, 1903, declaring that Mrs. Charlotte Ann Reynolds, postmistress, Daventry Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of her department.

III. 28th March, 1903, granting a retired allowance to George F. Laidlaw, rural postman, Christchurch Post Office, under Section 12 of the Superannuation Act 442

DISEASES OF ANIMAL ACTS (1894 AND 1896).—Two Orders, numbered 6641 and 6648 respectively, relating to the landing of foreign animals in Great Britain 443

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account for the year ended 31st December, 1902;

Statement of the total amounts advanced and the total repayments, the amounts of promissory notes given as security, to 31st December, 1902, together with the balance outstanding;

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 443

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS AND AMENDING ACTS.

Scheme for the Amendment of the management of Chew's Foundation in the Parish of Dunstable, in the County of Bedford, founded by deed of 16th December, 1724, and regulated by a scheme made under the Endowed Schools Acts on 28th June, 1880;

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) and to be printed. (No. 29.) ... 443

PETITION.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of; of the Airdrie and District Merchants Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 443

Berwickshire County Town Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} on Monday next.—(*The Lord Balfour.*) (No. 30.) 443

Naval Forces Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} on Thursday next.—(*The Earl Selborne.*) (No. 31.) 444

Contracts (India Office) Bill.—Read 1^{a}; and to be printed. (No. 32.) ... 444

Out-door Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read 444

Lord James of Hereford 444

Army Annual Bill.—Bill brought from the Commons and read 1^{a} (according to order) 444

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 34.) 444

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz:—

London County Council (Money) Bill.
Ordered that the Bill be read a second time 445

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 445

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 445

Apr. 27.] *Page*

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 445

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 445

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 445

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 445

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [LORDS]. Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 445

Western Trust Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time 446

North Eastern Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 446

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Oakenthorpes; Wooley; Darfield; Skelmersdale; Bolsover; Seymour; Bower; Bulwell; Treeton; Stubbin (No. 1); Pemberton; Benarty; Lassodie; Methilhill; Cardenden; Leven; Wellwood; Dunnikeir; Coaltown of Wemyss; Rosebank; West Wemyss; Donibristle; East Wemyss; Lochgelly: Wellsgreen; Fordell; Windygates; Oakley; Little Raith; Cowdenbeath; Blairhall; Townhill; Kirkford; Buckhaven; Balgonie; and Birley (No. 2) Collieries; to lie upon the Table 446

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Shepping Wycombe; and West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table ... 446

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Kirriemuir, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 446

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petitions against: from Eccles; Rodley; and Highgate; to lie upon the Table 446

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Glasford; and Dunoon; to lie upon the Table... 446

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.—Petition from Woolwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table 446

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petition from Long Eaton, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 446

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Sheerness, against; to lie upon the Table 447

Apr. 27.] *Page*

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Devizes, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 447

TRADES' DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Oakenthorpes; Wooley; Darfield Main; Skelmersdale; Bolsover; Seymour; Bulwell; Birley (No. 2); Treeton; Stubbin (No. 1); Pemberton; Methilhill; Cardenden; Leven; Wellwood; Dunnikeir; Coaltown of Wemyss; Rosebank; Donibristle; East Wemyss; Lochgelly; West Wemyss; Wellsgreen; Fordell; Windygates; Oakley; Cowdenbeath; Little Raith; Blairhall; Townhill; Kirkford; Balgonie; Buckhaven; Benarty; and Lassodie Collieries; to lie upon the Table... 447

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF MAILS BETWEEN GLASGOW, GREENOCK, AND CAMPBELTOWN).—Copy ordered, "of the Contract dated the 9th day of March, 1903, with the Campbeltown and Glasgow Steam Packet Joint Stock Company, Limited, for the conveyance of mails between Glasgow, Greenock, and Campbeltown; together with a Copy of the Treasury Minute thereon dated the 30th day of March, 1903."—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) 447

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).—Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the Receipts and Payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland, in the year ended the 31st day of December, 1902, in the Administration of Estates and the Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And, of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) 447

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.—Copy presented, of Fifth Report to the Secretary for Scotland of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 448

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.—Copy presented, of Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports, deposited with the Board of Trade during the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 123.] ... 448

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Report of Proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1902, and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.] 448

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 448

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th April; *Mr. Cullinan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.] 448

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).—Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 448

SOUTH AFRICA.—Copy presented, of further Papers relating to the Progress of Administration in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 448

QUEENSLAND.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to The Pacific Island Labourers' Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 448

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE) 1903–4.—Estimate presented, of the additional amount required in the year ending 31st March, 1904, to pay a Special Gratuity on Retirement (Superannuation and Retired Allowances) [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 126.] 449

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2961 to 2963 [by Command]; to lie upon the table 449

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).—Return ordered, "showing (1) the estimated amount of War Charges in South Africa and China incurred up to the 31st day of March, 1903; (2) how these charges have been met; and (3) how the money borrowed has been raised (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 155, of Session 1902)." —(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) 449

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

TRANSFER OF SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. George Kenyon (Denbigh); Answer, Sir William Anson 449

STATE PURCHASE OF INDIAN RAILWAYS.—Question, Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 450

GRAND NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE—CRUELTY TO HORSES.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 450

UNPRODUCTIVE LABOUR IN PRISONS.—Question, Mr. Flower (Bradford, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 451

CHILDREN IN METROPOLITAN POOR LAW INSTITUTIONS.—Question, Mr. Flower; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 451

VACCINATION REGISTERS AT POPLAR.—Question, Mr. Guthrie (Tower Hamlets, Bow); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 452

SORTING CLERKS AND TELEGRAPHISTS—RETURN OF PROMOTIONS.—Question, Mr. Jacoby (Derbyshire, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 452

LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY—CARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GOODS.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 453

COAL DUTY—INCORRECT DECLARATIONS.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 453

PENSIONS FOR WIDOWS OF SEAMEN KILLED ON SERVICE IN TIME OF PEACE.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas; Answer, Mr. Ritchie 454

CORN TAX—YIELD FOR YEAR 1902–3.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent, (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 454

IRELAND—POLLUTION OF THE RIVER BANN.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 454

Apr. 27.] *Page*

RECOVERY OF INSTALMENTS OF ANNUITIES UNDER THE PURCHASE ACT.—Question, Mr. George Faber (York); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 455

LIMITATIONS OF ARMY ORDER NO. 9.—Questions, Mr. John Hutton, (Yorkshire, Richmond); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 456

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

THE CONDEMNED SOLDIERS AT PRETORIA.—Question, Mr. William Redmond, (Clare, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 456

SIERRA LEONE—ARMAMENT OF COALING STATION.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 457

30TH PEMBROKE YEOMANRY AND THE WAR MEDAL.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Lord Stanley ... 457

COST OF SOMALILAND EXPEDITION.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Lord Stanley 458

ARMY GUILD OF THE HOLY STANDARD.—Question, Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answer, Lord Stanley... 458

ARMY CORPS RETURNS.—Questions, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) and Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich); Answers, Lord Stanley... 458

THE SERVICE BULLET.—Questions, Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answers, Lord Stanley 461

TRANSPORT OF MILITARY STORES TO SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Charles Allen (Gloucestershire, Stroud); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 462

ALL-INDIAN MEMORIAL TO QUEEN VICTORIA.—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 462

SOMALILAND MILITARY EXPENDITURE before 1898.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse; Answer, Earl Percy 463

INDIAN TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Earl Percy 464

CONCESSIONS IN EAST AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 465

MACEDONIAN REFORMS.—Question, Mr. Stevenson (Suffolk, Eye); Answer, Lord Cranborne 465

VENEZUELAN DISPUTE.—Questions, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Lord Cranborne 465

PREFERENTIAL RAILWAY RATES—INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS.—Question, Mr. Chaplin (Lincolnshire, Sleaford); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 466

TRADE DISPUTES—BOARD OF TRADE INTERVENTION.—Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 467

SETTLE LIMESTONE QUARRY LOCK-OUT.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 468

Apr. 27.] *Page*

WANTAGE MOTOR CAR FATALITY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 468

TREATMENT OF CASUAL PAUPERS.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 468

COUNTY MEDICAL OFFICERS.—Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 469

REGULATION OF MOTOR CAR TRAFFIC.—Question, General Laurie; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 470

WEYMOUTH LICENSING SESSIONS.—Question, Sir Barrington Simeon (Southampton; Answer, Mr. Cochrane 470

CARRYING AGENTS AND THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL VEHICULAR BY-LAW.—Question, Mr. Causton (Southwark, W.); Answer, Mr. Cochrane 471

SCHEMES UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT.—Question, Mr. Lloyd Wharton (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 472

GREENOCK SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 472

IRISH LAND BILL.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 473

IRISH CIVIL EXPENDITURE.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 474

IRISH CONSTABULARY AT RAILWAY STATIONS.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 474

MAGHERAFELT DISTURBANCES.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.), Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Gordon (Londonderry, S.), and Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 474

EDUCATION CAPITATION GRANT IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 476

EDUCATION RESULT FEES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 476

KILADYSERT POLICE INSPECTOR AND THE PRESS.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 476

GALWAY HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 477

DUBLIN MOTOR CAR FATALITY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 478

PROTECTION OF SEAMEN AT LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 478

BELFAST SORTING CLERKS' GRIEVANCES.—Questions, Mr. Sloan; Answers, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) ... 478

Apr. 27.] *Page*

ROCK ANGUS LIGHTHOUSE.—Question, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 479

COST OF ROYAL COMMISSIONS AND SELECT COMMITTEES.—Question, Mr. Malcolm; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 479

BAGHDAD-CONSTANTINOPLE RAILWAY SCHEME.—Question, Sir E. Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour... 480

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 480

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Report to lie upon the Table 481

NEW BILLS.

Shipowners' Negligence (Remedies) Bill.—"To enlarge the Remedies of Persons injured by the Negligence of Shipowners," presented by Mr. Harry Samuel; supported by Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Ernest Flower, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Major Evans-Gordon, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th of May, and to be printed. [Bill 166.] 481

Vagrant Children Bill.—"To provide for the better protection of Vagrant Children," presented by Sir John Gorst; supported by Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Ernest Flower, and Mr. Lloyd-George; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 167.] 481

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.—The Select Committee on National Expenditure was nominated of,—Mr. Churchill, Mr. Dillon, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Sir James Fergusson, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. Lough, Sir Lewis M'Iver, Sir Robert Mowbray, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Trevelyan, Sir Edgar Vincent, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the Quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) ... 482

BETHESDA (INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE).

Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 482
Mr. William Jones (*Carnarvonshire, Arfon*) 497

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the grave social and public interests involved in the continuance of the industrial dispute at Bethesda, this House condemns the inaction of His Majesty's Government, and declares its opinion that prompt intervention on their part is imperative to arrive at a just and effectual settlement.—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 505
Mr. Burt (*Morpeth*) 517

Mr. Vicary Gibbs (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 520
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 528
Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 534
Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) 536
Mr. Bromley Davenport (Cheshire, Macclesfield) 539

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

BETHESDA (INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th April], "That, in view of the grave social and public interests involved in the continuance of the industrial dispute at Bethesda, this House condemns the inaction of His Majesty's Government, and declares its opinion that prompt intervention on their part is imperative to arrive at a just and effectual settlement."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey) 549
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 556
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) 559
Mr. Lambton (Durham, S.E.) 563
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvonshire Boroughs) 566
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 571
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 577

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 182 ; Noes, 316. (Division List No. 70.)

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.—As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered ; to be read the third time this day 591

WAYS AND MEANS [23rd APRIL].

Resolution reported.

CUSTOMS—TEA.

"That the Customs Duty now charged on Tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say) : Tea—the pound, Sixpence."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chairman of Ways and Means, and Mr. Arthur Elliot 591

IRISH VALUATION ACTS.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what changes in the Irish Valuation Acts are desirable in order to enable a re-valuation of rateable property in any district to be made on a basis equitable to all classes of ratepayers, and to be brought into force in an effective manner.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Clancy, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Duke, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Lee, Mr. Lough, Mr. M'Cann, Mr. M'Killop, and Mr. Randles.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records 591

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 28TH APRIL, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

Jewish Colonisation Association [H.L.] 593

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 593

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—A petition of Messrs. Lewin, Gregory, and Anderson, of 6, The Sanctuary, Westminster, Parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of Messrs. Greenall, Whitley, and Company, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition 593

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 13th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed 593

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª 593

Jewish Colonisation Association Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to order) 593

South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Lytton; read and agreed to 594

Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills—viz.:

E. Albemarle,
L. Clifford of Chudleigh (chairman),
L. Oranmore and Browne,
L. Farrer,
L. Wandsworth.

Agreed to: and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills ... 594

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].—Petition against or for Amendment of, of the Faculty of Procurators of Greenock. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 594

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].—Petition against, of the Society of Solicitors in the Supreme Courts of Scotland. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 594

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of, of the Darlaston Licensed Victuallers and Beer Retailers Society. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 595

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—Petition for Abrogation of, of Roman Catholics residing in Ripon. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 595

Army (Annual) Bill.—Read 2ª (according to order): Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order) and dispensed with: Bill read 3ª and passed 595

Shops (Early Closing) Bill [H.L.]—THIRD READING. Order of the Day for the Third Reading read 595

Moved, that the Bill be now read 3ª.—(*Lord Avebury.*)

Earl of Wemyss 595

Amendment moved—

"To leave out all the words after 'that,' and insert 'this House resolves that legislative interference with freedom of contract and the liberty of labour of full-grown persons is contrary to the hereditary rights of a free people. That these rights are taken away by the Shops (Early Closing) Bill; and this House declines to proceed further with a measure hurtful alike to trade and industry, which would press cruelly on small shop-keepers and their working-class customers, and for the first time in modern legislation limits the hours of free adult labour.'"—(*The Lord Wemyss.*)

Lord Avebury 603
Lord Ribblesdale 607

On question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the Motion.

Their Lordships divided :—Contents, 45 ; Not Contents, 21.

Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Amendments (privilege) made.

Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY LAW AND PROCEDURE.

The Duke of Bedford 611
The Under Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Hardwicke) ... 624
Earl Spencer 631
The Lord President of the Council (The Duke of Devonshire) 632
The Duke of Northumberland 633
The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 637
The Marquess of Ripon 638

SOMALILAND.

Earl Spencer 638
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 639

RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

Earl Spencer 639
The Marquess of Lansdowne 639

NEW BILLS.

Betting Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Betting Acts, 1853, and 1874, and for other purposes was presented by the Lord Davey ; read 1ª ; to be printed ; and to be read 2ª on Thursday the 14th of May next. (No. 35.) 640

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 36.)—A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1902, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts 640

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (East Ham, &c.) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 37.)—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1900, to enable the School Boards for East Ham, Lower Michaelstone, Manchester, and Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

Was presented by the Viscount Churchill (for the Earl Vane (*M. Londonderry*) ; read 1ª ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners ... 640

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 28TH APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill (King's consent signified), read the third time, and passed. [New Title.] 640

City and South London Railway Bill. (Prince of Wales's consent signified), read the third time, and passed 641

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time... 641

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 641

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 641

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 641

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed 641

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).—Sir JOHN BRUNNER reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills: That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, 6th May.
Report to lie upon the Table 641

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).—Ordered, That Mr. Samuel Hood Cowper Coles do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills to-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock 641

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill; Scarborough Gas Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 642

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee:—

1. "That, in the Case of the Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

Resolutions agreed to 642

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for enlarging the powers of Investment of the Life Association of Scotland; and for other purposes." [Life Association of Scotland Bill (Lords).]

Apr. 28.] *Page*

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Hexham Gas Company." [Hexham Gas Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the objects and powers of the Lima Railways Company, Limited; and for other purposes. [Lima Railways Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for further extending the powers of the India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company, Limited." [India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for an increase and rearrangement of the share capital of North's Navigation Collieries (1889), Limited; and for other purposes." [North's Navigation Collieries Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Faversham Gas Company; and for other purposes." [Faversham Gas Bill (Lords).]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Exeter Railway Company to acquire additional lands; to revive and further extend the time for the completion of their authorised railways; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Exeter Railway Bill (Lords).]

Life Association of Scotland Bill [LORDS]; Hexham Gas Bill [Lords]; Lima Railways Bill [Lords]; India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [Lords]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [Lords]; Faversham Gas Bill [Lords]; Exeter Railway Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 642

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL. Petition from Lewes, against; to lie upon the Table 643

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Park Lane; Tibshelf; B. Winning; Scholes; Cadeby Main; Kiveton Park; Edge Green; Haydock; Ashton Moss; South Normanton; Pye Hill; Shipley Woodside; Denby; Codnor; Cossal Lodge; Pentrich; Stanley Common; West Hallam; Bower (No. 1); Morton; Broxtowe; Cinder Hill; Hulton; Whitwell; Bruntcliffe; Mirfield; East Ardsley; Billinge; Chickenley Heath; Morley Main; Plumtree; Newstead; Wath Main; Kirkby; Langton; Annesley; High Park; Bentinck; Moor Green; Digby; Stanton Hill; New Hucknall; New London; Brierley Hill; Portland; Bestwood; Linby; and Kearsley Collieries; to lie upon the Table ... 643

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Faversham; New Windsor; Droitwich; Pontefract; Bodmin; Hyde; Dewsbury; Ossett; St. Ives; and Rochester; to lie upon the Table ... 644

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Paisley; and Neilston; to lie upon the Table 644

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 644

GROCERS' LICENCES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 644

Page

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petitions against: from Plymouth; Lewes (two); and Margate; to lie upon the Table ... 644

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Balmaclellan; Dalry Galloway; Glasgow; Alexandria; Paisley; and Fenwick; to lie upon the Table 644

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition of the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association and Fellowship Union in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 644

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 644

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Cathcart, against; to lie upon the Table 644

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.—Petition from Ossett, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 645

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—Petition against: from Earl's Court; and Gravesend; to lie upon the Table 645

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.—Petition from Halifax, against; to lie upon the Table 645

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Edinburgh (seven); Glasgow (two); Greenock; Paisley; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table 645

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions for alteration of law: from Reading; Merthyr Tydfil; St. Helens; Salford; and Newton and Llanllwchaiarn; to lie upon the Table 645

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petitions against: from West Ham; and Stepney; to lie upon the Table 645

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Upton Park, against; to lie upon the Table 645

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Polegate; St. George's in the East; Erith; and Wigan; to lie upon the Table 645

SUPERANNUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions from Cathcart, against; to lie upon the Table 645

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Park Lane; Tibshelf; B. Winning: Scholes; Cadeby Main; Kiveton Park; Edge Green; Haydock; Ashton Moss; South Normanton; Pye Hill; Shipley Woodside; Denby; Codnor; Cossall Lodge; Pentrich; Stanley Common; West Hallam; Bower (No. 1); Morton; Broxtowe; Cinder Hill; Hulton; Whitwell; Bruntcliffe; Mirfield; East Ardsley; Billinge; Plumtree; Newstead; Bentinck; Wath Main; Annesley; High Park; Brierley Hill; Moor Green; Digby; New Hucknall; Stanton Hills; New London; Kirkby; Portland; Bestwood; Linby; Kearsley; Langton; and Garswood Hall Collieries; to lie upon the Table.. 645

WAGES BOARDS BILL.—Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table 646

Apr. 28.] Page

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BURGHCLERE (HANTS) (CHARITY).—Return ordered, "of the Correspondence between the Trustees of the Poor Allotment of Burghclere, Hants, and the Charity Commission respecting the recent proposals to sell the land comprised in that allotment."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

GRANTS IN RESPECT OF CONTINUATION CLASSES IN CROFTING DISTRICTS, 1902–3.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray … … … … … … … … 646

PRIZE FIRING OF CRUISER "PIQUE" AND SLOOP "ROSARIO."—Questions, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster … … 646

ADMIRALTY EXPENDITURE ON WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster … … … … … 647

NICLAUSSE BOILERS IN THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster … … … … … … … … … 647

LOTTERY AT THOMASTOWN SCHOOL, KILKENNY.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Atkinson … … … … 647

REDUCTION OF LIGHT DUES.—Question, Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour … … … … … … … 648

ST. LOUIS INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.—Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, Lord Cranborne … … … … … … … … 648

SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCE OF JOHN KEANE, OF GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot … … … 649

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—DEFAULT OF PAYMENT.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Wyndham… … … … … 649

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

15-POUNDER GUN.—Questions, Major Seely (Isle of Wight) and Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) … … … … … 650

ARMY RETURNS.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, Mr. Brodrick … … … … … … … … … 650

EMPLOYMENT FOR DISCHARGED SOLDIERS.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Brodrick … … … … … 653

LATE CAPTAIN MACKENZIE, NORFOLK REGIMENT.—Question, Mr. Mansfield; Answer, Mr. Brodrick … … … … … … … 654

THE LATE SIR HECTOR MACDONALD.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) … … … … … … 654

BRITISH COMMERCE IN WESTERN PERSIA—THE RIVER KARUN.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) … … … … 654

LABOUR RECRUITING FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN MINES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Cranborne … … … … … … … 655

THE OPERATIONS IN SOMALILAND.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Lord Cranborne 655

MEDICAL PRACTICE AT KOBÉ.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Cranborne 656

FINES IN BELFAST FACTORIES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, The Under Secretary of State to the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 656

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY FOR BRITISH LIGHT VESSELS.—Questions, Major Seely; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 657

SCOTTISH HARBOUR GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 658

AVOCH (ROSS-SHIRE) CHANNEL LIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 658

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 658

SCOTTISH LAND LAWS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 659

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 659

THE LATE MR. HANBURY.

Mr. Schwann 659
Mr. A. J. Balfour 660
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 661
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 661
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 661
Sir William Tomlinson (*Preston*) 662

Borough Funds Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 127.]

Bill to be considered upon Thursday 662

Local Government (Transfer of Powers) Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.]

Minutes of the proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 128.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 168] 662

SELECTION STANDING COMMITTEES.—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following fifteen members in

Apr. 28.] Page

respect of the Pistols Bill:—Major Kenneth Balfour, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Lord Alwyne Compton, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Duke, Mr. Helme, Mr. Batty Langley, Mr. Lowe, Sir William Rattigan, Mr. Renwick, Mr. Stuart Wortley, and Mr. Tomkinson.

Report to lie upon the Table 663

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment 663

London Education Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 663
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 677

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 690
Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping)... 697
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 703
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 713
Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) 719
Mr. Milvain (Hampstead) 724
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 727
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Aston Manor) 734
Mr. Harry Samuel (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) 737

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

London Education Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. Harry Samuel... 740
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 743
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 749
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 751
Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) 757
Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) 760
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 767
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 771

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Burdett-Coutts.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.—Read the third time and passed 776

Parliamentary Voters' Registration Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow 776

CHEW'S FOUNDATION.—Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying that he will withhold his consent from the Scheme under The Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and amending Acts, for the management of the Charity of Chew's Foundation in the parish of Dunstable, in the County of Bedford, founded by deed of the 16th day of September, 1724. —(*Mr. Ashton*) 776

Adjourned at Three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 29TH APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).—Report [28th April] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Pym 777

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 3).—Ordered, that Walter Burgh Gair do attend the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills on Friday, at Eleven of the clock 777

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Whiston; Town Bent; Old Mills Pit; Springfield Pit; Tyning Pit; Farrington Pit; Hyde; Coppull; Manvers; Loscore; Ilkeston; Heanor; Manvers Main; Carhouse; Rotherham; Altham; Ashton Field; Pontefract; Robin Hood; Topcliffe; Trencherbone; Craighead Blantyre: Kelty; and Methil Collieries; to lie upon the Table 777

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Torquay; Stockton-on-Tees; Manchester; and Newport; to lie upon the Table 777

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Dundonald, in favour; to lie upon the Table 778

Apr. 29.] *Page*

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petitions against: from South Shields; and Sunderland; to lie upon the Table 778

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Catrine; Kirkoswald; Muirkirk; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table ... 778

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Kirkcaldy, in favour; to lie upon the Table 778

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.—Petition from Shoreditch, for alteration; to lie upon the Table. 778

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Edinburgh; Shettleston; Tollcross; Hawkhill; Aberdeen; and Glasgow (two); to lie upon the Table 778

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petition from Lower Bebington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 778

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Altham; Whitson; Ashton Field; Hyde; Town Bent; Coppull; Manvers; Farrington; Tyning Pit; Loscore; Ilkeston; Heanor; Manvers Main (No. 2); Carhouse; Rotherham; Old Thornecliffe; Springfield Pit; Old Mills Pit; Craighead; Blantyre; Kelty; Trencherbone; Pontefract; Topcliffe; Muirkirk; Methil; and Blairadam Collieries; to lie upon the Table... 778

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 129.] 778

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Sydney Buxton]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 130.] 779

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Arthur Elliot]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 131.] 779

POST OFFICE CONTRACT FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF MAILS BETWEEN GLASGOW, GREENOCK, AND CAMPBELTOWN.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Arthur Elliot]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 132.] 779

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.—Account presented, of the gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.] 779

TURKEY (No. 3, 1903).—Copy presented, of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 779

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WARNED.—Copy ordered, "of Quarterly Returns, by Counties, of the public elementary schools (1) which have been warned by the Board of Education under Article 86 of the Code, including schools from which the Grant has been withheld under that article; (2)

which have been warned by the Board of Education that the annual grant will, in future, be withheld unless defects in the schools premises are remedied; (3) the annual grants to which have been suspended for three months or more from the date of the receipt by the Board of Education of the inspector's report on account of defects in school premises (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 240, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir Francis Powell.*) 779

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IMPERIAL NON-MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Question, Mr Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 780

SOLDIERS IMPRISONED IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 781

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY—BY-LAWS.—Question, Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Sir William Anson 781

POST OFFICE ELECTRIC GENERATING STATION.—Question, Mr. Harris (Tynemouth); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 781

IRELAND—EXCHEQUER ISSUE IN PAYMENT OF POOR RATE.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 782

HOUSE OF LORDS MANUSCRIPTS, VOLUME 2.—Question, Dr. Shipman (Northampton); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot 782

THE ADMIRALTY AND THE PACIFIC CABLE.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 782

IRISH LAND BILL.—FUTURE TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson... 783

IRISH LAND PURCHASE ACTS—PROCEEDINGS FOR DEFAULT.—Question, Mr Channing; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 783

MILITIA OFFICERS—RECOGNITION OF SERVICE DURING SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Brodrick... 783

ROYAL GARRISON REGIMENT RETURN.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Brodrick... 784

TREATMENT OF BRITISH INDIAN SUBJECTS IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Questions, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answers, Mr. J. Chamberlain 784

CENSORSHIP OF LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS IN THE TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 786

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

THE CONDEMNED SOLDIER AT PRETORIA.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 786

WAR STORES IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 787

7TH HUSSARS.—Question, Sir Arthur Hayter (Walsall); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 787

Apr. 29.] *Page*

SOMALILAND—MULLAH'S SUPPLY OF MUNITIONS.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 788

NAVAL BASE AT ST. MARGARET'S HOPE.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 788

SUGAR EXPORTS FROM MAURITIUS TO AUSTRALIA.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 788

RUSSIAN DEMANDS RESPECTING MANCHURIA.—Questions, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.), and Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) ... 789

TIENTSIN RAILWAY SIDING DISPUTE.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Lord Cranborne 789

ANATOLIAN RAILWAY CONCESSION.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Lord Cranborne 790

BAGHDAD RAILWAY SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Lord Cranborne 790

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS—COST OF COMMISSIONS AND COMPENSATION TO OWNERS.—Questions, Mr. Joyce and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 791

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.—Question, Mr. H. D. Greene (Shrewsbury); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 792

LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY'S CHARGES.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 792

INCOME TAX INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Arthur Elliot, Durham) 793

SCOTTISH BOARD OF MANUFACTURES.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)... ... 793

MAGHERAFELT RIOTS.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 793

IRISH LAND BILL—MARQUIS OF ELY'S ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.), and Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 794

IRISH LAND BILL.—Questions, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 794

GREAT BRITAIN, RUSSIA AND PERSIA.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 795

TOWN HOLDINGS COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 796

BAGHDAD RAILWAY SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 796

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 797

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Third Report brought up and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committeee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Stuart Wortley (added in respect of the Pistols Bill), and had appointed in substitution: Mr. James Hope.

Report to lie upon the Table.

London Education Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. Burdett-Coutts (Westminster) 799
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 808
Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 826
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland) 831
Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London) 836
Sir Michael Foster (London University) 839
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 842
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs)... 844
Sir William Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 850
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.) 853
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 858
Mr. Corrie Grant (Warwickshire, Rugby) 865
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 867

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 300; Noes, 163. (Division List No. 71.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

EVENING SITTING.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 873
Capt. Norton (Newington, W.) 881

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883; and to report whether any, and, if so, what, Amendments are necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere, and to secure the provisions of the accommodation required by workmen by all railway companies."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*)... 886

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'are,' to insert the words 'reasonable and.'"—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 888
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 889
Mr. Brigg (*Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley*) 891
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 892
Mr. Perks (*Lincolnshire, Louth*) 893
Mr. Nannetti (*Dublin, College Green*) 895
Mr. Lawson Walton (*Leeds, S.*) 895
Mr. Wylie (*Dumbartonshire*) 898
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 898

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883; and to report whether any, and, if so, what, Amendments are reasonable and necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere, and to secure the provision of the accommodation required by workmen by all railway companies.

CROWN LANDS IN WALES.

Mr. Brynmor Jones (*Swansea District*) 900
Mr. Herbert Lewis (*Flint Boroughs*) 908

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House regrets that the Government have not taken steps to carry out the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, that a Commission, the members of which should have the powers of Judges of the High Court of Justice, should be appointed to survey the Crown Lands in Wales and Monmouthshire, and to make an extent of the rents, dues, etc., payable from such Crown Lands, and is of opinion that sales of such Crown Lands should cease except where necessary in the public interest, and that they should be afforested wherever desirable."—(*Mr. Brynmor Jones.*)

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Durham*) 911

And it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).—Address for "Return showing the estimated position, as regards capital expenditure, of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1903, and the proposed expenditure thereon during 1903–4."—(*Mr. Price.*)

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, THURSDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1903.

COMMISSION. The following Bill received the Royal Assent—Army (Annual) ... 913

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.].—Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table 913

Pentillie Estate Bill [H.L.].—Judges' Report received. Bill presented and read 1ª 913

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision: of the British Electric Traction Company under their common seal; together with the proposed Amendments annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 913

Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill; Ordered, that the Bill be not further proceeded with 913

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 12th and 20th March last discharged, and Bill committed 913

Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]: South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 913

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with an Amendment... 913

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill. Read 2ª and committed .. 913

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill. Read 2ª, and committed for Tuesday next 913

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a petition of Messrs. Greenall, Whitney, and Company, leave given to present the said petition 914

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill (No. 40.); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1.) Bill (No. 41); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2.) Bill (No. 42); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3.) Bill (No. 43).—Read 1ª, to be printed; and referred to the examiners 914

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Brought from the Commons 914

Apr. 30.] *Page*

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; City and South London Railway Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 914

Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Bournemouth Corporation Tramways and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 914

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.—

E. Abington,
L. Barnard,
L. De Mauley,
L. Aberdare,
L. Glanusk (chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills ... 914

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].—Petition against; of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 915

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—Petition for abrogation of; of Catholics residing in Ford, Liverpool; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 915

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (WATER-TUBE BOILERS).—Report on further trial of H.M.S. "Hyacinth" and H.M.S. "Minerva" (with diagrams) 915

TURKEY NO. 3 (1903).—Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe 915

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2964. Spain (Bilbao).
No. 2965. Netherlands (Amsterdam).
No 2966. France (French Indo-China) 915

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND AND WALES).—General Abstract for 1902 915

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising—

I. The construction of—

Light railways from Leighton Buzzard to Hitchin, in the counties of Bedford and Hertford.

Light railways in the urban district of Barking Town, in the county of Essex.

Light railways from Morriston to Pontardawe, in the county of Glamorgan; extensions of light railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Deviation, etc.) Order, 1902.

A light railway in the county of Wilts, forming an additional junction between the Basingstoke and Salisbury Railway of the London and South Western Railway Company, near Porton, and the light railway authorised by the Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway Order, 1898.

II. The extension of Light Railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Deviation, etc.) Order, 1902.

III. Amending the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Order, 1900.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 916

METROPOLITAN POLICE ACCOUNTS.—Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Fund between the 1st April, 1902, and the 31st March, 1903 916

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (PARTICULARS OF PIECE-WORK WAGES: FELT HATS).—Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 22nd April, 1903, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, to the making of felt hats, and repealing the existing Order of the 30th November, 1897 916

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.—Accounts showing receipts and expenditure on account of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-Up) Act, 1890, during the year ended 31st March, 1903 916

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).—Account showing the receipts and expenditure on account of Bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table... 917

ARMY (ESTIMATES).—Return showing the items of expenditure in 1903–1904, amounting to £34,245,000, in excess of those of 1893–94 amounting to £17,631,300. Laid before the House (pursuant to Address of the 30th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 38.) 917

MANCHURIA.

Earl Spencer 917
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 917

Land Registers (Scotland) Bill [H.L.]—Order of the Day for the House going into Committee read.

The Secretary for Scotland (Lord Balfour of Burleigh) 918
Lord Tweedmouth 919

Committee of the whole House put off to Tuesday next.

Naval Forces Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The First Lord of the Admiralty (The Earl of Selborne) 922

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Selborne*).

Earl Spencer 924

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

REGULATION OF MOTOR CARS.

Lord Lamington 926
Earl of Portsmouth 927
Lord Belper 928

THE PROPOSED ARMY GUILD SERVICE.

The Earl of Portsmouth 929

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.—Read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 39.) 931

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for re-arranging the boundaries of the dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester, and Bath and Wells—was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 44) 931

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

COMMISSION.—Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to: 1. Army (Annual) Act, 1903 931

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 931

PRIVATE BILL (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz :—

Romford and District Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 931

POST OFFICE SITES BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred pursuant to the Order of the House of the 6th day of April, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Post Office Sites Bill 932

Western Trust Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 932

Dover Corporation Bill (By Order).—Read a second time and committed ... 932

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—"To extend the time limited by The Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Act, 1900, for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of certain of the railways authorised by that Act; and for other purposes." Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 932

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 5).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Castleblaney (Urban), Castleblaney (Rural), the Port of Cork, and the Portadown and Banbridge Joint Waterworks District. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham ... 932

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Metropolitan Boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn, and Lambeth. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long 932

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Coventry, Rawmarsh, Shipley, and Tynemouth. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long 933

LANARKSHIRE AND AYRSHIRE RAILWAY ORDER CONFIRMATION.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway. Ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland 933

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No 5) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Castleblaney (Urban), Castleblaney (Rural), the Port of Cork, and the Portadown and Banbridge Joint Waterworks District." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 169.] 933

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Metropolitan Boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn, and Lambeth." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 170.] 933

Apr. 30.] *Page*

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Coventry, Rawmarsh, Shipley, and Tynemouth." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 171.] 933

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway." Presented; and ordered to be considered upon Monday next 933

City and North East Suburban Electric Railway Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed." ... 933

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 3).—Mr. COMPTON RICKETT reported from the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills: That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock

Report to lie upon the Table 934

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.—Two petitions from Brighton, against; to lie upon the Table 934

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Greasbrough; Poynton; Dysart; Snydale (No. 2); Bank Hall; Burnley; Wallsend Main; Dearne Valley; Barnsley Main; Stanhope Silkstone; Burnley; Frystone (No. 2); Haigh; Crigglestone Coal Company; Stourton Grange, Leeds; Lea Green; Tong; Netherton; Denby Grange; Houghton Main; Waverley; Orgreave; Grange; Newmarket Silkstone; Wakefield; Bowers (No. 2); Lofthouse; Bowers (No. 3); Newland; Frystone (No. 1); Leeds Central; Nostell; Carlton Main; Newmarket High Moor; Marchay; Tollcross; Southgate; Marlpool; Grassmoor (No. 3); Clay Cross; Ryhill Main; South Hindley; and Halton Collieries; to lie upon the Table 934

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Burnley; Heath; and Aberavon; to lie upon the Table 934

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions from Yell, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 934

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petitions against; from Battersea; Southampton; and Upton Park; to lie upon the Table... 934

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration; from Spynie; and Alyth; to lie upon the Table 934

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from North Berwick, in favour; to lie upon the Table 934

PETITIONS.

MARRIAGE WITH DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—Petitions against: from Walthamstow; Oxford; Liverpool; and Brighton (two); to lie upon the Table ... 935

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Leith; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table 935

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Coventry, against; to lie upon the Table 935

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Southgate; Greasbrough; Poynton; Dysart; Bank Hall; Burnley; Barnsley Main; Wallsend Main;

Stanhope Silkstone; Dearne Valley; Burnley; Frystone (No. 2); Lea Green; Newmarket High Moor; Newland; Bowers (No. 3); Stourton Grange, Leeds; Lofthouse; Leeds Central; Frystone (No. 1); Nostell; Methley; Snydale (No. 2); Haigh; Crigglestone Coal Company; Netherton; Denby Grange; Houghton Main; Waverley; Orgreave; Grange; Newmarket Silkstone; Wakefield; Bowers (No, 2); Tollcross; Tong; Marlpool; Marehay; Grassmoor (No. 3); Clay Cross; South Heindley; Halton; and Ryhill Main Collieries; to lie upon the Table... 935

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND). Copy presented, of General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 935

NAVY (WATER TUBE BOILERS).—Copy presented, of Report on further Trials of H.M.S. "Hyacinth" and H.M.S. "Minerva" (with diagrams) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 935

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.—Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 135.) 935

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).—Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 136.) 936

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES; FELT HATS).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 22nd April, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the making of Felt Hats and repealing the existing Order of the 30th November, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 936

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th April; Mr. Price]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 137.) 936

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2964 to 2966 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 936

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Wilts, forming an additional junction between the Basingstoke and Salisbury Railway of the London and South Western Railway Company near Porton, and the Light Railway authorised by the Amesbury and Military Camp Light Rail-Railway Order, 1898 (Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway (Newton Toney Curve) Order, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 936

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Order, 1900 (Mid-Suffolk Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 936

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising extensions of Light Railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light

Apr. 30.]

Railways (Deviation, &c.) Order, 1902 (Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 937

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the counties of Bedford and Hertford from Leighton Buzzard to Hitchin (Leighton Buzzard and Hitchin Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 937

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban district of Barking Town, in the county of Essex (Barking Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 937

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways from Morriston to Pontardawe, in the county of Glamorgan (Glamorgan County Council (Morriston to Pontardawe) Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 938

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) (GUARANTEE FUND).—Return ordered, "of Payments to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account and other Exchequer Grants which form the constituent parts of the Guarantee Fund, under 54 and 55 Vic., c. 48, s. 5, and 61 and 62 Vic., c. 37, s. 58, as proposed to be amended by the Irish Land Bill, 1903.)"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134] 938

ARMY (COMMISSIONS).—Address for "Return as to number of Commissions granted during each of the years 1899 to 1902, inclusive."—(*Mr. Pirie.*) ... 938

VOLUNTEERS.—Address for "Return respecting the Volunteers, in the following form:—

	Officers.	Men.	Battalions
Number of Volunteer battalions - - - -			
Number of battalions qualified under new regulations for inclusion in Army Corps Scheme -			
Number required by Scheme - - - -			
Number of efficients who have earned Capitation Grant, 1902 - - - - - - - -			
Strength of Volunteers—			
1st day of January, 1903 - - - -			
1902 - - - - - - - -			
1901 - - - - - - - -			
1900 - - - - - - - -			
1899 - - - - - - - -			
Shortage of Officers—			
1903 - - - - - - - -			
1899 - - - - - - - -			

(*Mr. Churchill.*) 938

MILITARY WORKS AND STORES.—Address for "Return respecting Military Works and Stores, in the following form :—

	Military Stores.	Artillery.	Fortifications.	Barracks.
Amount of money expended:—				
1899				
1900				
1901				
1902				
1903				

—(*Mr. Churchill.*) 938

ROYAL GARRISON REGIMENTS.—Address for "Return showing the annual cost of the Royal Garrison Regiment now stationed at Malta; the number of cases of drunkenness, of courts-martial, and of diseases treated in hospital which have occurred within the last twelve months; the number of women and children borne on the strength of the Regiment; and a comparison of these figures with the respective figures in any particular Regular Battalion in the same garrison; the number of Royal Garrison Regiments sanctioned by Parliament; and the number as yet formed."

Mr. Churchill 939

HOUSE OF LORDS (MANUSCRIPTS).—Ordered, that a message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series.)—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) 939

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY ELECTRIC TRAMS.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (City of London); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 939

DEATH OF UNCLE OF RULING CHIEF OF PANNA—COST OF INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 940

INDIA—GOVERNMENT ADVANCES TO NATIVE STATES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 941

INDIA—ACREAGE OF IRRIGATED LANDS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 941

BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND RAJAHS OF PANNA.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 942

INDIA—GRANTS FOR IRRIGATION WORKS—UNEXPENDED BALANCES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 942

NAVAL RESERVE MEN EMPLOYED IN ROYAL DOCKYARDS.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 942

Apr. 30.]

Page

DAMAGE TO "PRINCESS ALEXANDRA."—Question, Mr Charles M'Arthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 943

PUBLIC HEALTH—VITAL STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 943

SUGGESTED INCREASE OF CONSULAR REPRESENTATION.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St George's); Answer, Lord Cranborne 944

TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE—INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES.—Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 944

IMPROVED POSITION OF SORTERS IN CHARGE OF TRAVELLING POST OFFICES.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 944

DUBLIN SCIENCE AND ART AND NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS, ETC.—POSITION OF EMPLOYEES.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot 945

CIVIL SERVICE—WRITERS' PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot... 945

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF JOHN STAPLETON.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Lord Stanley 946

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF HENRY DUKE, LATE OF 81ST FOOT.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Lord Stanley 946

SOMALILAND OPERATIONS—WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 947

ROUGH RIDERS AND SCOUTS—HEIGHT REGULATIONS.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 947

PACIFIC CABLE—INTERRUPTION OF SERVICE.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Secretary Chamberlain 947

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR TROPHIES.—Question, Mr. Bill (Staffordshire, Leek); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 948

ARMY MEAT CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. Bill; Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 948

ARTILLERY FIRING.—Questions, Major Seely (Isle of Wight), Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), and Lt.-Col. Geo. Kemp (Lancashire, Heywood); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 949

COLLISION BETWEEN THE "BULWARK" AND THE "FORMIDABLE."—Question, Sir William Allan (Gateshead); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 949

NATIVE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) ... ... — 950

ALASKAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 951

TIENTSIN RAILWAY SIDING AWARD.—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley); The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 951

RUSSIA AND THE NIU-CHWANG REVENUES.—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton; Answer, Lord Cranborne 952

RUSSIA AND CHINA.—Questions, Mr. Joseph Watson; Answers, Lord Cranborne 952

LONDON UNDERGROUND RAILWAY—ELECTRIFICATION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 953

BANKRUPT ALIENS.—Question, Mr. Forde Ridley (Bethnal Green, S.W.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 954

LICENSING IN WORCESTERSHIRE.—Question, Col. Long (Worcestershire, Evesham); Answer, The Under Secretary of State to the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 954

POSTAGE ON PERIODICALS TO CANADA.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) ... 955

GLYCERINATED CALF LYMPH.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 956

NATIONAL VACCINE ESTABLISHMENT.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 956

CLIFFORD'S INN.—Questions, Mr. Rea (Gloucester), Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.), and Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.); Answers, The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 957

IRISH RATE COLLECTIONS.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 959

DUNDRUM CRIMINAL LUNATIC ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 959

HOUSING ACCOMMODATION IN GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Atkinson... 960

CASTLEREA RAILWAY INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 960

MOUNTMELLICK MAIL DELAYS.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 961

THE HAGUE CONVENTION AND ANGLO-RUSSIAN DISPUTES.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)... 961

Pistols Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 138.)

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. (No. 138.)

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed [Bill 172.] 962

Apr. 30.] *Page*

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That Sir John Dorington be discharged, and that Mr. Hayes Fisher be added to the Committee.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) 962

Poor Prisoners Defence Bill.—The Select Committee on the Poor Prisoners Defence Bill was nominated of, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Black, Mr. Bousfield, Colonel Bowles, Mr. Duke, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Kimber, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. William Redmond, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland Hood.*) ... 962

SUPPLY [7th ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,895,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage and other Supplies, including South African Compensation Claims, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904."

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 963

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item L be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Cranborne, Rochester*) 972
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 980
Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 985
Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 986
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 988
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) 992
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 993
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) ... 999
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 1006
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Burghs*) 1008

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 233. (Division List No. 72.)

Original Question again proposed.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903–4.—REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,267,500 be granted to his Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the

year ending on the 31st day of March 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the collection of the Post Office Revenue."

The Postmaster-General (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) ... 1015
Mr. Bayley (*Derbyshire, Chesterfield*) 1029

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill (BY ORDER).

Mr. McVeagh (*Down, S.*) 1030

SUPPLY [7th ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES 1903–4.—REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £6,267,500, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the collection of the Post Office Revenue."

Mr. Bayley... 1031
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1033
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 1034
Mr. Goulding (*Wiltshire, Devizes*) 1036
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 1037
Mr. Duke (*Plymouth*) 1044
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 1047
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (*Kent, Tunbridge*)... 1049
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*)... 1054
Mr. Nannetti (*Dublin, College Green*) 1061

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Postmaster-General.—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 1062
Mr. Lough 1064

And, it being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Page

Borough Funds Bill.—(Not amended by the Standing Committee), considered; Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next … … 1064

Outdoor Relief (Pensioners) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment; Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next … … … … … … … … … … 1064

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 1st MAY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Salford Corporation [H.L.]. (Petition for additional provision.)
North-Western Electricity and Power Gas [H.L.]. (Petition for additional provision.)

And the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Ipswich Gas; Great Northern and City Railway; Broadstairs Gas; Bath Corporation Water; Bridgwater Gas; East Ardsley Gas; Stoke Newington Borough Council; Midland Railway; North Middlesex Gas.

And the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with—

Maidstone Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table … … … … … 1065

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.] (Petition for additional provision); Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.] (Petition for additional provision); Maidstone Gas Bill.—Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next … … … … … … … . … … 1065

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee … … … … … … 1065

Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments … … 1065

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill.—Committee to meet on Tuesday next … … … … … … … … … … 1066

Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection that the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill … … … 1066

Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]—The order made yesterday appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged … 1066

Page

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order) 1066

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 1066

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª and passed, and sent to the Commons 1066

Western Trust Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 1066

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF LORDS MANUSCRIPTS.—Message from the Commons for copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series); Ordered to be communicated 1066

TRANSVAAL.—Papers relating to the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903 (Ordinance No. 1); Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table ... 1066

THAMES CONSERVANCY.—General Report of the proceedings of the Conservators of the River Thames during the year ended 31st December, 1902; with a statement of the accounts of the Conservators for that year; Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1066

Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—The following Lords were named of the Select Committee:—

Earl Ancaster.
Lord Belper.
Lord Lamington.
Lord Monkswell.
Lord Alverstone.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman 1067

MANCHURIA.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*)... 1067

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 1ST MAY, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed... ... 1068

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill.—Verbal Amendment made (King's Consent signified); Bill read the third time, and passed 1068

Great Eastern Railway Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time 1068

Great Northern Railway Bill, as amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1068

May 1.] Page

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1068

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Athlone and Kingstown (two); ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Athlone and Kingstown (two);" presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 173] 1068

Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill; Commercial Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table 1068

Nelson Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1068

Private Bills (Group D).—Ordered, That Mr. William Charles Robinson, Captain C. P. Wilson, Mr. James W. Richardson, Mr. James Watt, Mr. James H. Gough, and Mr. George Holland, do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock 1069

Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill.—Reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table 1069

Leigh Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bill, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1069

PETITIONS.

Aged Pensioners (No. 2) Bill.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1069

Borough Funds Bill.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1069

Coal Mines Regulation Bill.—Petitions in favour: from Westhoughton (three); Fence; Aldwarke; Grayfield Pit; Waleswood; Denton; Paisley; Ashton Moss; Bowling; Motherwell; Bellshill; Ellistown; Snibston; Hightown; Wharncliffe; Silkstone; Hindley (nine); Cradleye Lye; Wellshot; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Clackmannan; Alva; Devon; and Swanwick Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1069

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

County Courts Bill and County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill.—Petition from Bath, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

Detention of Poor Persons (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour: from Bathgate; and Benholme; to lie upon the Table 1070

May 1.] Page

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (REPAYMENT OF LOANS) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1070

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Elgin; Banff; and Pittenweem; to lie upon the Table 1071

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—Petitions against: from Codford; Oxford (four); Balham; Boscastle; and Gainsborough; to lie upon the Table 1071

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Birmingham and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 1071

MOTOR CARS (TAXATION).—Petition from Pembroke, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1071

PETROLEUM BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1071

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.—Petition from Battersea, against; to lie upon the Table 1071

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Huddersfield; and Battersea; to lie upon the Table 1071

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1071

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Rochdale; Trowbridge; Seven Kings; and Battersea; to lie upon the Table 1071

TIED HOUSES (ABOLITION) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour: to lie upon the Table 1071

TIED HOUSES (FREEING) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1071

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Westhoughton (three); Fence; Aldwarke; Grayfield Pit; Waleswood; Hindley (nine); Denton; Paisley; Ashton Moss; Bowling; Motherwell; Belshill; Ellistown; Snibston; Hightown; Wharncliffe; Silkstone; Tye; Cradley; Wellshot; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Clackmannan; Alva; Devon; and Swanwick Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1071

TRAMWAYS (HOURS OF LABOUR) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1072

May 1.] Page

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1072

VACCINATION BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1072

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1072

WAGES BOARDS BILL.—Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1072

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903 (Ordinance No. 1), or the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1072

TREATY SERIES (NO. 6, 1903).—Copy presented, of Accession of the Republic of Guatemala to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field, 24th March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1072

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2967 to 2968 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.
Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House 1072

THAMES CONSERVANCY.—General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 139.] 1072

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

DUNDRUM CRIMINAL LUNATIC ASYLUM—ATTENDANTS' HOURS.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1073

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1073

METROPOLITAN POOR LAW—CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM OPHTHALMIA AND RINGWORM.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1074

Marriage With a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill [SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 1074

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 1084
Sir John Kennaway (*Devonshire, Honiton*) 1087
Mr. Guest (*Plymouth*) 1090

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir John Kennaway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Lord Edmund Talbot (*Sussex, Chichester*) 1092
Sir J. Fergusson (*Manchester, N.E.*) 1093

Mr. Randles (Cumberland, Cockermouth) 1097
Mr. Sharpe (Kensington, N.) 1098
Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 1100
Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) 1106
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 1109
Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe) 1112
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge) 1115
Mr. Talbot (Oxford University) 1118

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 164; Noes, 94. (Division List No. 73.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc,"—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

Mr. Hardy (Kent, Ashford) 1122
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 1123
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 1123
Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) 1124
Mr. Griffith Boscawen 1125
Mr. Seely (Lincoln) 1125
Mr. Talbot 1126
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.)... 1127
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1128
Mr. Halsey (Hertfordshire, Watford) 1129

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 74.)

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) 1133

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1133

And it being half-past Five of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Friday, 19th June.

Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill being read.

Mr. Asher (Elgin Burghs) 1134

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the earlier closing of shops." [Shops (Early Closing) Bill [LORDS.] 1134

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Second Report brought up, and read. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.] 1135

May 4.] *Page*

Agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 12th instant at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also Counsel for the Bills 1138

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 45.)**—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Burton-upon-Trent Corporation Tramways, Bury Corporation Tramways, Cardiff Corporation Tramways (Extension), Huddersfield Corporation Tramways, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways, and Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways 1139

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 46.)**—A Bill to confirm certain provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Barrow-in-Furness Tramways, Horsforth Urban District Council Tramways, Keighley Corporation Tramways, and Ramsbottom Urban District Council Tramways 1139

Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] **(No. 47).**—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover and District Water, Goring and Streatley District Water, Leatherhead and District Water, Ludgershall Water, and Mid-Kent Water 1139

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] **(No. 48).**—A Bill to confirm certain Provinsional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aldershot Gas and Water, Amersham, Beaconsfield and District Water, St David's Gas and Water, St. Neots Water, and Wexford Gas 1140

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 49).**—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Cobham Gas, Conisbrough Gas, Hailsham Gas, St. Ives (Huntingdonshire) Gas, and Woking District Gas 1139

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] **(No 50).**—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Brading Harbour District Gas, Crossgates, Halton, and Seacroft Gas, Herne Bay Gas, Pembroke Docks and Town Gas, and Riddings District Gas 1140

Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation (No 1) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 51).**—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Llandudno, Galway and Scrabster.

Were presented by the Lord Wolverton; read 1ª; to be printed and referred to the Examiners 1140

North British Railway (General Powers) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the North British Railway, Was presented by the Lord Balfour (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, Sections 8 and 9); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 52) 1140

Page

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTRATION (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]—Petition against : of Society of Advocates in Aberdeen ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1140

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—Petition for abrogation of ; of Roman Catholics residing in Branton and Byshottles District, County Durham ; read and ordered to lie on the Table 1141

INTOXICATING LIQUORS.—Petition against the sale of, on Sunday ; of the inhabitants of Swindon, in the county of Wilts ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1141

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREATY SERIES, No. 6, 1903.—Accession of the Republic of Guatemala to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field, 24th March, 1903 ... 1141

TRADE REPORTS : ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2967. United States (Boston).
No. 2968. United States (Texas) 1141

EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND). Annual Report for the year 1902 ... 1141

FISHERIES (IRELAND).—Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland, for the year 1901 (Part II. Scientific Investigation)... 1141

ARMY (CANTEENS AND REGIMENTAL INSTITUTES). Report of the Committee on Canteens and Regimental Institutes.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1141

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND). Four Orders with respect to the Urban County Districts of Bangor, Carrick-on-Suir, and Tullamore ... 1141

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Licences granted by His Majesty to (1) Herbert Arthur Green, (2) to Alfred Edwardes, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table... 1141

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.—The Earl of Belmore added to the Committee ... 1142

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee that they have added the Earl of Belmore to the Standing Committee ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1142

Berwickshire County Town Bill.—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 1142

Naval Forces Bill.—House in Committee (according to order) : Bill reported without Amendment ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 1142

May 4.] Page

THE CASE OF COLONEL KINLOCH.—

The Duke of Bedford 1142
The Under Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Hardwicke)... ... 1148
Earl Roberts 1157
The Duke of Northumberland 1165
Viscount Goschen 1170
Lord Harris 1176
Lord Blythswood 1177
The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 1177

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 4TH MAY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—
Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time 1178

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.—

Life Association of Scotland Bill [Lords]; Faversham Gas Bill [Lords]; Hexham Gas Bill [Lords]; Lima Railway Bill [Lords]; India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [Lords]; North Navigation Collieries Bill [Lords]; Exeter Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time 1178

Great Central Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made. Bill to be read the third time 1178

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [Lords]; London County Council (General Powers) Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time 1178

London County Council (Money) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1178

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Wednesday 1178

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1179

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 4).—Ordered, That William Creasy, Herbert W. Gibson, and Percy J. Sheldon do attend the Committee on Group No 4 of Railway Bills on Thursday, at half-past eleven of the clock... 1179

May 4.]

Page

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).—Ordered, That Robert Baggalay do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock... 1179

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow... 1179

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to construct additional dock works on the Liverpool side of the River Mersey; to amend in certain respects the Acts relating to that Board; and for other purposes." [Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill] [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Company; and for other purposes." [Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill] [Lords].... 1180

HOUSE OF LORDS (MANUSCRIPTS).—That they communicate Copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series), as desired by this House 1180

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords]: Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1180

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.—Petition from Elford, against; to lie upon the Table 1180

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Rotherham (No. 2); Holbrook; West Kiveton; Hucknall (No. 1); Senghenydd; Hednesford; West Cannock (No. 3); Cannock Chase; Jerome (No. 11) Pit; Garforth; Mow Cop; Hucknall (No. 2); Newton; and, Pontllanfraith Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1180

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Logie Pert; and, Auchterhouse; to lie upon the Table 1180

LICENCES RENEWAL AND TRANSFER BILL.—Petition from North Lambeth, against; to lie upon the Table... 1180

LIBEL BILL.—Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table 1180

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Dumfries; Ancrum; Glasgow; and, Jedburgh; to lie upon the Table 1181

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petitions against: from Seaton; Elford; Reading (two); and, Charlton on Otmoor; to lie upon the Table 1181

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.—Petition from Paddington, against (praying to be heard by Counsel); to lie upon the Table 1181

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Peterborough; and, Badminton; to lie upon the Table 1181

May 4.] *Page*

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.— Petitions in favour: from Glasgow; Dundee; and, Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table 1181

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.—Petition from Greenock, against; to lie upon the Table 1181

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Rotherham (No. 2); West Kiveton; Holbrook; Senghenydd; Newton; Hednesford; Cannock Chase; Jerome (No. 11) Pit; Garforth; Mow Cop; Hucknall (No. 2); Hucknall (No. 1); and, Pontllanfraith Collieries; to lie upon the Table ... 1181

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (LICENCES REFUSED).—Return presented, relative thereto [address 17th March, Mr. Cochrane]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.] 1181

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE)—Copy presented, of a licence to be at large granted to Mr. Herbert Arthur Greene, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1181

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a licence to be at large granted to Alfred Edwards, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1181

EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the Year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1182

FISHERIES (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1901. Part II. Scientific Investigations [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1182

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Four Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland with respect to the Urban County Districts of Bangor, Carrick-on-Suir, and Tullamore [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1182

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (CONTRIBUTIONS BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS). — Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 9th March; Mr. Trevelyan]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 142.) 1182

SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN AND WAR CONTRIBUTION (GUARANTEE).—Committee to consider of authorising the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments (King's Recommendation signified), upon Wednesday.—(*Sir William Walrond.*) 1182

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROPOSED REFRESHMENT KIOSK AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey)... 1182

MOSELY MISSION—PUBLICATION OF REPORTS.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield Central); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1183

CONSTRUCTION OF PIER AT AULTBEA, ROSS-SHIRE.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1183

REGISTRATION OF POSTAL PACKETS—PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 1183

PROMOTION IN THE BRIGHTON POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain... 1184

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE—EXTRA EXPENDITURE ON ACCOUNT OF WAR.—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1185

TRANSVAAL COMPENSATION AND LOAN.—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1185

EXCHEQUER BONDS.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1186

OUTPUT OF LYMPH BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1186

PRIVATE ESTABLISHMENTS FOR SMALLPOX PATIENTS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1186

DOGS FOUND BY THE POLICE—COST OF KEEP.—Question, Col. Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1187

CONVICTS AS WITNESSES—IMPROVED FARE.—Question, Mr. Guthrie (Tower Hamlets, Bow); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1187

RE-ARREST OF ESCAPED CRIMINAL LUNATICS—CASE OF SHEEHAN.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1187

IRISH LAND PURCHASE ACTS—UNEXPENDED BALANCES.—Question, Mr. Goulding (Wiltshire, Devizes); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1188

MESSRS. VICKERS, SON & MAXIM, AND THE FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1188

SOLDIERS IN COUNTY ASYLUMS—CASE OF PRIVATE BOWERS.—Question, Mr. Frederick Wilson (Norfolk, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1189

CONSTRUCTION OF DOCKS AT SIMONSTOWN, SOUTH AFRICA—FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answer, Mr. Pretyman ... 1189

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN ON TEA ESTATES IN CEYLON.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1190

DESTITUTE ENGLISH WORKMEN IN CANADA.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1190

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

65TH BATTERY, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1191

CITY OF LONDON ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.—Question, Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester); Answer, Lord Stanley 1192

DONEGAL ARTILLERY.—Question, Dr. Thompson (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1192

May 4.] Page

ARMY CORPS RETURNS.—Questions, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answers, Lord Stanley... 1192

INDIAN CUSTOMS DUTIES.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) ... 1195

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central) 1196

CONGO FREE STATE.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1196

MOROCCO.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.), and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Lord Cranborne 1197

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE. — Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 1198

SHREWSBURY ELECTION PETITION — PROSECUTIONS FOR CORRUPTION.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 1198

THE KING'S VISIT TO PARIS—AN UNFOUNDED RUMOUR.—Question, Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.); Answer, Sir Robert Finlay 1199

INCOME TAX.—Question, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Arthur Elliot, Durham) 1199

BURY MAGISTRACY.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Lancashire, Bury); Answer, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Sir William Walrond, Devonshire, Tiverton) 1199

BISHOPS FROOME CHARITY.—Question, Mr. Edwards (Radnor); Answer, Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tonbridge); 1200

MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING COLLEGE, DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1200

IRISH LAND BILL—TOWN PARKS.—Question, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1201

IRISH LAND BILL.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1201

WICKLOW VALUATION.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1202

IRISH POOR LAW MEDICAL OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1202

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1202

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — DESTRUCTION OF PAPERS.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1203

CUNARD AGREEMENT. — Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, The Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1203

HOUSING ACCOMMODATION AT WESTMINSTER. Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1203

THE LAW OFFICERS AND MR. WHITAKER WRIGHT. — Question, Mr. Lambert, Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1204

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE. - Questions, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar), Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.); Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), and Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1204

NEW BILLS.

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill. "For the acquisition of certain land in Dublin as a site for a proposed Royal College of Science and other offices and buildings for the public service, and for purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Arthur Elliot; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 175.] 1205

Aged Pensioners (No. 3) Bill.—"To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Goulding; supported by Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Remnant, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bull, Mr. Hay, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Bousfield, and Mr. J. W. Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 176.] 1206

Irish Land Bill—[SECOND READING.] -Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1206
Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent) 1224
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 1233

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1241
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1255
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 1266
Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton) 1284

And it being half-past seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Irish Land Bill. Order read, for resumed adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [4th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was,

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

May 5.] *Page*

Debate resumed.

Mr. Ashton 1285
Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 1291
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1300
The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) ... 1313

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. William O'Brien*), put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

The Borough Funds Bill.—[THIRD READING.]—On the Motion for the Third Reading of this Bill.

Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth N.) 1324
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... 1324

Bill read a third time and passed.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 5TH MAY, 1903.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee 1325

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 1325

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 1325

South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That, the Committee adjourned this day at a quarter past Eleven o'clock ... 1325

Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1325

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment 1325

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment 1325

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1325

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.]; Jewish Colonisation Association Bill [H.L.].—Committed 1325

Great Northern and City Railway Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed ... 1325

Broadstairs Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1325

May 5.] *Page*

Bath Corporation Water Bill; Bridgwater Gas Bill; East Ardsley Gas Bill; Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed ... 1325

Midland Railway Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1326

North Middlesex Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed... 1326

Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.].—Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1326

Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee. That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on 9th March and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 1326

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee. That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 9th of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 1326

South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Duke of Manchester and the Lord Barrymore be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth and the Lord Ellenborough; read, and agreed to 1326

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].—Petition against: of Procurators and Solicitors in Dundee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1326

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of: of the Hamilton Merchants' Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1327

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FEE FUND OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Account of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords. The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices 1327

AFRICA, No. 3 (1903).—Report by Mr. A. Whyte on his recent travels along the sea coast belt of the British East Africa Protectorate 1327

TREATY SERIES, No. 7 (1903).—International Convention relative to Bounties on Sugar, signed at Brussels, 5th March, 1902 (ratifications deposited at Brussels, 18th June, 1902, 1st February, 1903) 1327

COLONIES (ANNUAL).—No. 383 Bermuda (Report for 1902).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1327

May 5.] *Page*

Berwickshire County Town Bill.—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 1327

MUNICIPAL TRADING.—Commons Message considered (according to order): Moved, that this House do concur in the following Resolution, communicated by the Commons, viz., That it is expedient that a Select Committee of the House of Commons be appointed to join with a Committee of this House to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction—The Lord President (*Duke of Devonshire*) agreed to; and a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith 1327

Borough Funds Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 54.) 1328

Land Registers (Scotland) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived.

The Secretary for Scotland (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 1328

Amendments made. Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House; and to be printed as amended.

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1329

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE PERSIAN GULF.

Lord Lamington 1329
Lord Ellenborough 1339
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Cranborne, Rochester*) ... 1343
Lord Newton 1353

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN HARRISON.

Lord Muskerry 1354
Lord Wolverton 1354

THE LOADING PORT CLAUSE IN SHIP'S ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT.

Lord Muskerry 1354
Lord Wolverton 1356

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 5TH MAY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has been complied with, viz.—

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill 1357

May 5.] Page

Private Bills (Standing Order 66 not Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions of Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 66 has not been complied with, viz.—

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill.

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1357

Provisional Order Bills (Standing Orders Applicable Thereto Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1358

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill.—Read the third time and passed 1358

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2).—Bill, as amended, considered; Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1358

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Gas).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cudworth, Hucknall-under-Huthwaite, and Meltham, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long 1358

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board, relating to the counties of East Sussex and Leicester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long 1358

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Auckland, Shildon, and Willington, the Croydon and Wimbledon, the Tarvin, Malpas, and Tarporley, and the Windsor and Egham Joint Hospital Districts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long 1358

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barry, Fenton, Leeds, and Tonbridge, and the Ports of Hartlepool and Manchester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson, and Mr. Walter Long 1358

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cudworth, Hucknall-under-Huthwaite, and Meltham," presented and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 177.) 1359

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the counties of East Sussex and Leicester," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 178) 1359

May 5.] *Page*

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Auckland, Shildon, and Willington, the Croydon and Wimbledon, the Tarvin, Malpas, and Tarporley, and the Windsor and Egham Joint Hospital Districts," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 179.) ... 1359

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barry, Fenton, Leeds, and Tonbridge, and the Ports of Hartlepool and Manchester," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 180.) ... 1359

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).—Ordered, That Professor Vivian Byam Lewes do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills To-morrow, at Eleven of the Clock 1359

London United Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1360

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Public Offices (Dublin) Bill with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) 1360

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolution reported from the Select Committee, "That, in the case of the Romford and District Tramways Bill, Petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

Resolution agreed to 1360

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, an "Act for conferring further powers upon the company of proprietors of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Navigation; and for other purposes." (Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to regulate the capital of the South Wales Mineral Railway Company; and for other purposes." (South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Milford Docks Company; and for other purposes." (Milford Docks Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to abolish the rate now levyable for certain church purposes in the parish of All Saints, Poplar, in the County of London, and to make other provisions for securing the stipend of the Rector of All Saints, Poplar; and for other purposes." (All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition), Bill [Lords].)

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for reviving and extending the period limited by the Knott End Railway Act, 1898, for the compulsory purchase of lands, and for extending the period limited by that Act for the construction of the railway by that Act authorised; and for other purposes." (Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].) ... 1360

May 5.] *Page*

MUNICIPAL TRADING.—That they concur with the Commons in their Resolution, "That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction" 1361

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [LORDS]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [Lords]; Milford Docks Bill [Lords]; All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition), Bill [Lords]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1361

Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1361

Hyde Corporation Bill; New Hunstanton Improvement Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bill, with Amendments.

Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1361

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D.)—Mr. NICOL reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.—Report to lie upon the Table 1361

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Bonville's Court; Batley West End; Clifton; Wollaton; South Kirkby; Wharncliffe Woodmoor; Monk Bretton; Biddulph; Cheadle; Forfield; Blackheath; Rowley Regis; North Staveley; Ackton Hall; Bromley Pit; New Duffryn; Tynewydd; Caerphilly; Larkhall; and Newton Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1362

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Chorley; and Gloucester; to lie upon the Table 1362

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Forfar; and Alva; to lie upon the Table 1362

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Wandsworth; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table 1362

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Two Petitions from Aberdeen, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1362

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Greenock; and Clackmannanshire; to lie upon the Table 1362

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Penryn, against; to lie upon the Table 1362

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1362

PORT OF LONDON BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1362

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Workington; and Jarrow; to lie upon the Table 1362

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table 1363

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Edinburgh; Glasgow; and Greenock; to lie upon the Table 1363

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions for alteration of law: from Warrington; Bradford; and Chorley; to lie upon the Table 1363

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Bonville's Court; Batley West End; Clifton; Wollaton; South Kirkby; Wharncliffe Woodmore; Monk Bretton; Biddulph; Cheadle; Forfield; Blackheath; Rowley; North Staveley; Ackton Hall; Bromley Pit; Elsecar; Hickleton Main; New Duffryn; Tynewydd; Caerphilly; Larkhall; and Newton Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1363

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS, VOLUME II. (NEW SERIES).—Paper [communicated 4th May] to be printed 1363

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report No. 383 (Bermuda, Annual Report for 1902) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 1363

ARMY (CANTEENS, &C.).—Copy presented, of Report of the Committee on Canteens and Regimental Institutes [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 1363

ROYAL NAVY (RETIRED OFFICERS).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 8th April; *Sir John Colomb*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 144.) 1363

TREATY SERIES (NO. 7, 1903).—Copy presented, of International Convention relative to Bounties on Sugar.—Signed at Brussels, 5th March, 1902.—Ratifications deposited at Brussels, 18th June, 1902, to 1st February, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1363

AFRICA (NO. 3, 1903).—Copy presented, of Report by Mr. A. Whyte on his recent Travels along the Sea-Coast Belt of the British East Africa Protectorate [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1364

WAGES AND PROFITS IN COAL MINING.—Copy ordered, "of Tables showing for the United Kingdom, and the principal Coal Mining Districts, the quantity and value of Coal produced, and the number and average Wages of Coal Miners in the years 1901 and 1902, respectively, together with the estimated amounts expended on Miners' Wages, and remaining for other expenses and Coalowners' Profits in the United Kingdom in each year; with Explanatory Memorandum (in the same form, and with the same particulars, as Parliamentary Paper, No 179, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*) 1364

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).—Address for "Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1903–4, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*) 1364

Trade Disputes Arbitration Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday read and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1364

May 5.] *Page*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

MOTOR CARS ON PUBLIC HIGHWAYS -SPEED REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Walter Long ... 1365

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS—SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES OFFERING SHORTHAND.—Question, Mr. George Brown (Edinburgh, Central); Answer, Mr. Arthur Elliot 1365

CHINA—OPIUM TAX.—Question, Mr. Henry J. Wilson (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1365

THE NATIONAL DEBT.—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar); Answer, Mr. Ritchie... 1366

EDGE HILL STATION (L. & N. W. RAILWAY) TELEGRAPH FACILITIES.—Question, Mr. Marshall Hall (Lancashire, Southport); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1367

POSTAL TELEGRAMS TO LONDON.—Question, Mr. Marshall Hall; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1367

LISTOWEL POOR LAW UNION.—Question, Col. M'Calmont (Antrim, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1368

PAY OF VOLUNTEER SERGEANT INSTRUCTORS.—Question, Mr. Randles (Cumberland, Cockermouth); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1368

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE TRANSVAAL.—COL. THOMAS'S REPORT.—Question, Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1368

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

FIJI—POLL TAX.—Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1369

FORCED LABOUR ON FIJIAN ROADS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer Mr. J. Chamberlain 1369

NATIVE REGULATIONS IN FIJI.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain... 1369

FIJIAN PETITION TO THE KING.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1370

DEPORTATION OF FIJIAN CHIEFS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1370

SUVA BUBONIC PLAGUE HOSPITAL.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1370

CORN DUTY.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's Co., Ossory); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1371

REGULATION OF MOTOR CAR TRAFFIC.—Questions, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) and Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1371

May 5.]

Page

MR. HENRY A. B. WALLIS, J.P.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... ... 1372

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY. — Questions, Mr. Delany and Mr. Tully (Leitrim, S.): Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1372

TREATMENT OF EMIGRANTS AT LONDONDERRY.—Questions, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1373

IRISH UNION AMALGAMATION. — Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1373

IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS' REMUNERATION.—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1374

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1374

SLIGO ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1375

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1375

Irish Land Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question (4th May), "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. William O'Brien (Cork) 1376
Sir Edward Grey (Northumberland, Berwick) 1386
Sir H. Meysey-Thompson (Staffordshire, Handsworth) 1397
Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Moulton)... 1401
Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid) 1408
Dr. Thompson (Monaghan, N.) 1414
Mr. Seymour Ormesby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) 1429
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 1433
Mr. Goulding (Wiltshire, Devizes) 1442
Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 1447

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Midland, Belfast, and Northern Counties Railway Bill.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1452

Instruction, by leave, withdrawn.

Irish Land Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [4th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 1453
Mr. Wood (*Down, E.*) 1456
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1461
Mr. Thomas Shaw (*Hawick Burghs*) 1466
Col. Wyndham-Quin (*Glamorganshire, S.*) 1475
Mr. Moulton (*Cornwall, Launceston*) 1478
Mr. Spear (*Devonshire, Tavistock*) 1488
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 1492

And, it being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 6TH MAY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Scarborough Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 1497

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1497

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1497

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1497

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban district of Athy and the rural district of Naas (No. 1), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham 1497

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Dromore, Holywood, Larne, Lisburn, Newry, Newtownards, Portrush, and Warrenpoint, and the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, and Down, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham 1497

May 6.] *Page*

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 8).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Armagh, Clonakilty, Fermoy, Kinsale, Lurgan, Macroom, Midleton, Portadown, Queenstown, Skibbereen, and Youghal, the Counties of Armagh and Cork, and the Kildare Drainage District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham 1497

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban district of Athy and the rural district of Naas (No. 1)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 181) 1498

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Dromore, Holywood, Larne, Lisburn, Newry, Newtownards, Portrush, and Warrenpoint, and the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, and Down," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 182) 1498

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Armagh, Clonakilty, Fermoy, Kinsale, Lurgan, Macroom, Midleton, Portadown, Queenstown, Skibbereen, and Youghal, the Counties of Armagh and Cork, and the Kildare Drainage District," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 183) ... 1498

Railway Bills (Group No. 4).—Ordered, that Walter Tomes and James Joseph Rayner Green do attend the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock 1499

Private Bills (Group B).—Mr. Tennant reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at twelve o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1499

Middlesbrough Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1499

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1499

PETITIONS.

Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Elgin, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1499

Coal Mines Regulation Bill.—Petitions in favour: from Newtown (No. 1); Oakengates; White Rose; Arral Griffin; Mardy; Tredegar; Pochin (No. 1); Blackwood; Whitworth (No. 2); Clyde; Longton (No 1) Lodge; Sandford Hill, Longton; No. 1 Pit, Wheatsheaf, Pendlebury; Newtown (No. 2); Bonds Main; Coalburn; Carluke; Leigh; Old Silkstone; Strafford Main (No. 2); Forth and Wilsontown; Church Lane, Dodworth; Grange Moor; Oldham; Wortley and Farnley; Wharncliffe Silkstone (No. 2); Bunker's Hill Lodge; Goldenhill; Kidsgrove; Halmer End;

May 6.] Page

Pittshill; Audley; Rookery, Audley; Brown Edge; Burnley and Sladderhill; Talke (two); Bucknall; Harriseahead; Foxley and Kenmure; Smallthorne; Ford Green; Jamage, Audley; Roundwood; Wet Earth and Day Eye; Alsager Bank; Clay Cross; Sheepbridge (No. 1); Chesterfield; Cadzow; Gilbertfield; Llanbradach; Hill of Beath; Pleasley; Walton; Alma; Holmwood; Glasswell; Lepton; Bretby; Granville; and, Nadin and Company's Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1499

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Colchester, and Todmorden; to lie upon the Table... 1500

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition in favour: from Fetteresso; Baldernock; and Logie; to lie upon the Table... 1500

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Elgin, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1500

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Elgin, against; to lie upon the Table 1500

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Two Petitions from Eccles, against; to lie upon the Table 1500

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions for alteration: from Dunfermline; Cardross; Elgin; and Carnoustie; to lie upon the Table 1500

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Bridgton; Haddington; and Perth; to lie upon the Table... 1500

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Stirling, against; to lie upon the Table 1500

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.—Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1500

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Reading, against; to lie upon the Table 1500

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Murton Colliery; Lea and Holloway; Halifax; Siddal; Dewsbury; Rishton; and Netherthong; to lie upon the Table 1500

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Aberdeen; Leith; and Dundee; to lie upon the Table 1501

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petitions from Todmorden, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 1501

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Stockross; and Tongham; to lie upon the Table 1501

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.—Petition from Hamilton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1501

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Newtown (No. 1); Oakengates; White Rose; Arral Griffin; Mardy; Tredegar; Pochin (No. 1); Blackwood; Whitworth (No. 2); Clyde; Longton (No. 1) Lodge; Sandford Hill, Longton; No. 1 Pit, Wheatsheaf, Pendlebury; Newton

May 6.] *Page*

(No. 2); Bonds Main; Coalburn; Carluke; Leigh; Old Silkstone; Strafford Main (No. 2); Forth and Wilsontown; Church Lane, Dodworth; Grange Moor; Oldham; Wortley and Farnley; Wharncliffe Silkstone (No. 2); Bunker's Hill Lodge; Goldenhill; Kidsgrove; Halmer End; Pittshill; Audley; Rookery, Audley; Brown Edge; Burnley and Sladderhill; Talke; Bucknall; Harriseahead; Foxley and Kenmure; Smallthorne; Ford Green; Jamage, Audley; Clay Cross; Sheepbridge (No. 1); Chesterfield; Pleasley; Gilbertfield; Cadzow; Llanbach; Hill of Beath; Lepton; Holmwood; Walton; Glaswell; Bretby; Nadin and Company's; Roundwood; Agecroft; Fenton Lodge; Pencoed; Middleton; and Granville Collieries: to lie upon the Table 1501

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).—Copy presented, of Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1902 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1501

POOR LAW CHILDREN (COTTAGE HOMES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th December, 1902; *Sir Walter Foster*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 145.) 1502

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 4) BILL.—Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) 1502

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 5) BILL.—Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) 1502

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 6) BILL.—Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) 1502

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

STATUS OF STOREHOUSEMEN IN PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1502

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.—INVERT SUGAR.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1502

EXCHEQUER CONTRIBUTIONS TO IRELAND.—Question, Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1503

WATER SUPPLY AT ENTEBBE, UGANDA.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1503

NATIVE AND EUROPEAN QUARTERS AT ENTEBBE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Lord Cranborne 1504

DUTIES OF OUTDOOR POSTMEN AT CORK.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1504

INDIAN RAILWAY SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1504

MILITARY COURTS-MARTIAL.—Question, Mr. H. D. Greene (Shrewsbury); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1505

RECOGNITION OF SERVICES OF MILITIA OFFICERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1505

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR — REWARDS AND PROMOTIONS. — Question, Mr. Yerburgh; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1506

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS BY TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT.—Question, Sir Alfred Hickman (Wolverhampton, W.); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1506

MIDWIVES BOARD.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Sir William Anson 1507

PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1507

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

NEW NAVAL BASE ON THE FORTH.—GARDEN CITIES.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1508

WEST INDIA DOCK—ADMIRALTY STATIONERY STORE STAFF.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1508

OBSOLETE WAR SHIPS.—Question, Sir Christopher Furness (Hartlepool); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster ... ... ,, ... 1509

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS AND THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1509

MILITARY SERVICE IN INDIA.—Question, Capt. Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1510

TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1510

TRINIDAD RIOTS.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1510

DELHI RAILWAY CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 1511

FAMINE IN CENTRAL AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) ... 1512

RAILWAYS IN UGANDA.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1512

INCOME TAX INQUIRY.—Questions, Capt. Norton and Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1513

CROSS CHANNEL TRANSIT OF IRISH LIVE STOCK.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1513

May 6.] *Page*

WAGES OF THE RURAL POSTMEN IN NORTHUMBERLAND.—Question, Mr. Burt (Northumberland, Morpeth); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1514

GLYCERINATED CALF LYMPH.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1515

AVOCH (ROSS-SHIRE) HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1515

INEBRIATES HOME IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1515

LYMPH SUPPLIES FOR SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1516

ULSTER WINTER ASSIZES.—Question, Mr. Wood (Down, E.); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1516

RIVER BANN FLOODS.—Questions, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) and Mr. Wood; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1516

SLIGO GRAZING LANDS.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1517

IRELAND AND THE ST. LOUIS EXHIBITION.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1517

IRISH RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.—Question, Mr. Wood; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1517

ELECTION OF PETTY SESSIONS CLERK, CO. MAYO.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 1518

MR. HERAGHTY, J.P.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1518

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS INSPECTORS' REPORT.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1519

FARRANES LICENSING PROSECUTION.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1519

FOREIGN ORDERS—ACCEPTANCE BY BRITISH OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1520

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) and Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour and Mr. Ritchie 1520

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Mr. Stuart-Wortley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON reported: That they had appointed Sir James Fergusson to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, at the conclusion of the consideration of the Employment of Children Bill, in the place of Mr. John Edward Ellis.

Reports to lie upon the Table 152

May 6.] *Page*

NEW BILL.

Military Lands Bill.—"To amend the Military Lands Acts, 1892 to 1900, with respect to the acquisition of Land for Military Purposes," presented by Mr. Charles Allen; supported by Mr. Russell Rea; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 184.] 1521

SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN AND WAR CONTRIBUTION [GUARANTEE].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain Birmingham, W.) 1522

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal Colony not exceeding in the aggregate an amount sufficient to raise £35,000,000, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments, and to provide for the application of any sums paid by the Transvaal or Orange River Colony in respect of expenses incurred in or incidental to the prosecution of the late War in South Africa."—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1551
Mr. Claude Lowther (Cumberland, Eskdale) 1554
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1555
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1557
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 1560
Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) 1562
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 1563
Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 1567
Mr. M'Kenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 1568
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 1569
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1572
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 1574
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1577
Mr. J. Chamberlain 1580

Resolved, "That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal Colony not exceeding in the aggregate an amount sufficient to raise £35,000,000, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments, and to provide for the application of any sums paid by the Transvaal or Orange River Colony in respect of expenses incurred in or incidental to the prosecution of the late war in South Africa."—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

May 6.] Page

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, 1904."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. J. H. Lewis (*Flint Boroughs*) ... 1581
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) ... 1581
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) ... 1582
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) ... 1582
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) ... 1583

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

Prevention of Corruption Bill [LORDS].—[SECOND READING.] Order for Second Reading read.

Sir John Gorst ... 1583
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) ... 1584
Mr. Cripps (*Lancashire, Stretford*) ... 1584
Mr. Faber (*Hampshire, Andover*) ... 1585
Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) ... 1585
Sir Walter Thorburn (*Peebles and Selkirk*) ... 1585
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) ... 1586
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) ... 1586
Mr. Cohen (*Islington, E.*) ... 1586
Mr. Lawson Walton (*Leeds, S.*) ... 1586

Bill read a second time.

Mr. Whitley ... 1587
Mr. Ritchie ... 1587

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

SUPPLY.—21ST APRIL, AFTERNOON SITTING.

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—CLASS 1.—

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £40,600, be granted to His Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

2. "That a sum not exceeding £51,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

3 "That a sum, not exceeding £27,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

4 "That a sum, not exceeding £36,120, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Miscellaneous Legal Buildings."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £30,150, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £37,500, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries abroad."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £339,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, and certain Post Offices abroad, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £222,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st dry of March, 1904, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain not provided for on other Votes."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £119,019, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the survey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith."

10. "That a sum, not exceeding £14,204, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for maintaining certain harbours under the Board of Trade, and for Grants in Aid of Harbours."

11 "That a sum, not exceeding £17,980, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead."

CLASS II.

12. "That a sum, not exceeding £48,288, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and for Kew Botanic and Pleasure Gardens, including certain Grants in Aid."

Resolutions read a second time.

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1590
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Durham*) ... 1590
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 1590
Mr. Ritchie 1591
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 1591
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (*Huntingdonshire, Ramsey*) 1592

Page

May 6.]

First Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."—Debate arising.

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1592
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 1592
Mr. Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 1593

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, further consideration of second and subsequent Resolutions stood adjourned till this Evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

RAILWAY SERVANTS.

Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 1593
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 1597

Motion made and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Board of Trade should exercise more vigorously the powers conferred on it by the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, and other Acts with a view of preventing excessive hours of labour by railway servants engaged in working the traffic, and of securing sufficient intervals of uninterrupted rest between the periods of duty and sufficient relief in respect of Sunday duty, and that with a view to the diminution of accidents to railway servants the appointment of additional sub-inspectors is necessary to ensure that the rules adopted under the Railways Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, are strictly observed."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Mr. Arthur Morton (*Deptford*) 1607
Sir Harry Seton-Karr (*St. Helens*) 1608

Amendment proposed.—"To leave out the word 'that' to the end of the Question, and add the words, 'this House notes with satisfaction the steady improvement shown in the Returns of Accidents on Railways in the United Kingdom, and expresses the hope that the Board of Trade will continue to use all due diligence in exercising the statutory powers which it possesses under the Acts relating to the regulation of the Hours of Railway Servants and the Prevention of Accidents on Railways.'"—(*Mr. Arthur Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 1613
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 1615
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeenshire, S.*) 1623

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 126; Noes, 161. (Division List No. 75.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Debate arising.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc. 1628

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CXXI.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 21st April, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Broadstairs Gas Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill, a verbal Amendment made; Bill read the third time, and passed.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill; Ipswich Gas Bill; Market Drayton Gas Bill; Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill; Sutton District Water Bill, read the third time, and passed.

London Hydraulic Power Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Maidstone Gas Bill as amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Midland Railway Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway (No. 1) Bill (by Order); Central London Railway Bill (by Order); Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions) Bill (by Order); Metropolitan District Railway (Works) Bill (by Order); North West London Railway Bill (by Order) Orders for Second Reading read and discharged; Bills withdrawn.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cohen and Mr. John Burns.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

Petition for additional provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Moresby: Oatlands; Harrington; and Allhallows Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Warrington; Hartlepool; Leicester; Loughborough; Yeovil; Blackpool; Stalybridge; and Burslem; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Tillicoultry; Ayr; Rathven; and Mains; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION CODE (SCOTLAND), 1903.

Petition from Edinburgh, for alteration of Article 13; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Dundee; Muirkirk; Logie; and Kettine; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Glasgow (four); Edinburgh; Leith; Greenock (two); and Dundee (eleven); to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions for alteration of law: from Hindley; and Stalybridge; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Tisbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition from Greenock, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Ramsgate; and Grimsby; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES' DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Oatlands; Harrington; Moresby; and Allhallows Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).

Copy of Thirteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Copy of Report for the year 1901.

TREATY SERIES (No. 5, 1903).

Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Denmark for regulating the fisheries outside territorial waters in the ocean surrounding the Faroe Islands and Iceland. Signed at London, 24th June, 1901. Ratifications exchanged at London, 28th May, 1902.

EGYPT (No. 1, 1902).

Copy of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1902.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2952 to 2958 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of February 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) (NUNS EMPLOYED).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; *Mr. Sloan*]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MARTIAL LAW IN SOUTH AFRICA).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Administration of Martial Law in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Progress of Administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Finances of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the year ended December 31st, 1902, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS.

Copy presented, of Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on Trade and Subjects of General Interest (with Appendix), 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 25th February; *Mr. D. A Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.]

SEA FISHERIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1902.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 8th April; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University for the year ended September 30th, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.]

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrew's for the year 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

English, Scotch and Irish Contributions to Imperial Revenue.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the net contribution to Imperial Revenue of England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, for the years 1894–5, 1898–9, 1899–1900, 1901–2, and, if available, 1902–3.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The Balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which were available for Imperial expenditure after meeting the local expenditure of those divisions of the United Kingdom, were as follows:—

	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
	£	£	£
1894–5 -	54,535,000	6,687,000	2,074,000
1898–9 -	63,402,500	7,838,000	1,725,000
1899–1900	69,540,500	8,660,000	1,684,500
1901–2 -	87,619,000	10,996,000	2,570,200

Agricultural Rates Act—Exchequer Grants.

MR. LAMBERT: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the total issues out of the Exchequer for the most recent year available under the provisions of the Agricultural Rates Act, England; its equivalent for Scotland; and the issues to Ireland under the Local Government Act, 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The amounts issued from Imperial Revenues in the financial year 1902-3, under the Agricultural Rates Acts, England and Scotland, and for the Agricultural Grant under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, were: To England, £1,327,981 5s. 11d.; to Scotland, £280,413 5s. 3d.; to Ireland, £727,655 0s. 0d.; the last amount was part of a total issue to Ireland of £1,018,226 13s. 8d. under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Old Battleships as Floating Forts.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether, before any more of the older types of battleships are broken up or otherwise disposed of, he will consider the advisability of utilising some of these ships as floating forts, provided with modern guns and manned by Naval Volunteers, for the defence of mercantile ports such as Liverpool, Glasgow, Hull, Bristol. and Belfast.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The cost of fitting these vessels with modern ordnance would be prohibitive, and it is chiefly for this reason that many of the older types of battleships have not been modernised for use in the Fleet.

Venezuelan Arbitration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, what is the present state of the negotiations with regard to the recent war in Venezuela and the proposal for arbitration; and are any, and if so what, questions relating thereto still unsettled.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): Article V. of the Protocol signed on February 13th, 1903, provided that any question as to the distribution of the Customs revenues to be assigned for the payment of the claims specified in Article III. of the said Protocol, and as to the right of Great Britain, Germany and Italy to a separate settlement of their claims, should be determined, in default of arrangement, by the Tribunal at the Hague by arbitration. The agreement prescribing the precise terms of reference is now under discussion with Venezuela and with the Powers interested, but as negotiations are still proceeding at Washington, it would be contrary to the practice of His Majesty's Government to make any statement of the kind suggested.

West Indian Sugar Industry.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies can he now state what has occurred with regard to the Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of the Crown Colony of Jamaica empowering the guarantee out of the colonial revenues of the interest on capital employed in establishing sugar factories.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Central Factories Law, 1902 which received the Governor's assent on the 2nd August last, enabled the Government of Jamaica to guarantee interest at a rate not exceeding 5 per cent. on capital invested in any approved scheme for the establishment of Central Factories, not necessarily confined to the sugar industry. This law has been amended by the Central Factories Law, 1902, Amendment Law, 1903, which received the Governor's assent on the 1st April. This limits the rate at which such interest may be guaranteed to a maximum of 4 per cent. Instructions have been issued to the Governor precluding the entertainment of any scheme involving a guarantee of interest at any rate higher than that which the Government Inscribed Stock bears in the London market. No action has been taken under these Laws.

New South Wales and the Sugar Rebate.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies have the inquiries, which were to be made on 23rd February last as to the communication of the Premier of New South Wales protesting against New South Wales having to bear the cost of a rebate on sugar, now been completed; and can he lay upon the Table the text of that communication.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There has not yet been sufficient time to enable me to receive a reply to the inquiries which were addressed to the Governor-General of Australia on this subject.

The Bagdad Railway.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the case that arrangements have been concluded between the promoters of the Bagdad Railway and the British group of financiers for the raising of the share capital allotted to this country.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No, Sir; there is no change at all since I last spoke to the House on the day the House separated.

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,600, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) moved to reduce the Vote by £100 in order to draw attention to the decision of the Lord High Commissioner to remove his Court and Levées from Holyrood Palace to the Station Hotel. He declared that if this change was to be made permanently, it would do a good deal to remove the sentiment which at present existed in Scotland in favour of the State connection. If the Church of Scotland was to be disestablished, the people of Scotland would prefer that it should be disestablished on broader grounds than on the question whether or not Holyrood Palace was habitable. He should like to be informed whether this was a mere temporary arrangement, and if, in another year, the Lord High Commissioner would revert to Holyrood Palace, which had so many historical associations. To put himself in order he moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. John Dewar.*)

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) said he knew that the question had created great consternation in Scotland, and he might say on behalf of the Board of Works that what they had heard and seen during the last two or three days had come as a great surprise to them. He might say at once that the Lord High Commissioner, Lord Leven and Melville, was acting on his own responsibility and without any authority from the Government as a body. The Board of Works were fully alive to the fact that some little work was wanted to be done as regarded the drainage of Holyrood Palace, and this year they had set aside a sum of £3,500 for drainage and other sanitary arrangements. These arrangements were not nearly so bad as had been made out by certain newspapers, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman that although the Lord High Commissioner had, on his own responsibility, determined not to live at Holyrood, but simply to hold his Levées there, yet at the same time this was not to be regarded as a precedent, and was only a temporary arrangement. He hoped that by next year the drains would be brought to a satisfactory state.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said they had got very little enlightenment from the statement which had just been made. What they wanted to know was what was being done by the additional money to be expended on Holyrood Palace? In Scotland the feeling was not only one of surprise, but one akin to indignation that this slight should have been put upon their country. For his own part he had very little sympathy with the whole of the procedure of the Lord High Commissioner, with bands of music playing and processions in the streets; but the other aspect of the question was that they were voting money for the upkeep of this Royal Palace absolutely in the dark as to the true reason why the representative of Royalty declined to establish himself there. Instead of going to the Royal Palace, he had taken up his quarters in a public-house in Edinburgh. This representative of Royalty did not even think of establishing himself in a temperance public-house—but in a place with an "on" licence, facing a public street, where his State coaches and the like would be a great interruption to the traffic of Edinburgh. There he would receive, and give dinners, and in the meantime Holyrood Palace would be given over to the moles and the bats. What were the intentions of the Government with regard to Holyrood? Did they mean to hand it over to the moles and bats, or did they mean to let it as a brewery? It seemed on the face of it to be a great slight to pay to the Church of Scotland, and to historic associations, which were dear to very many of the Scottish people. The statement they had heard was that the Government were just about as much surprised as the people of Scotland. Why should they be surprised? He supposed the Government had some share in the selection of this representative, whose salary was put upon the Votes passed by the House. If Holyrood Palace was not fit to receive him, why should that not have been foreseen and provided for? If his salary was not sufficient to enable him to reside in the Palace and he had to go into licensed premises, why was that not also put upon the Vote? It was said that the Lord High Commissioner had done all this upon his own responsibility. Were the Government going to leave him in that position, that he might put this slight upon the Church and upon the nation? All the Government told them was that they were very much surprised. He never heard of public money being expended on grounds of that kind, and he hoped that before they were done with it they would have the question threshed out. He would ask, therefore, whether the Government knew and approved of what Lord Leven and Melville had done, whether they meant to put Holyrood in a state fit to live in, and whether, if by this Vote it was put in a habitable state, Lord Leven and Melville was to reside there, or to live in licensed premises.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said he desired to associate himself with the remarks of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. He could assure the Government that the announcement that the Lord High Commissioner was going to reside in the North British Station Hotel, and not at the ancient Palace of Holyrood, had raised a feeling of consternation. Nations were moved by sentiment; they were proud of their Holyrood Palace, for they had few Royal Palaces existing in Scotland now, and if the Lord High Commissioner did not find it suitable to reside in Holyrood, he thought it was a matter that deserved a reprimand from the Government. He should like to hear something stronger. He should like to hear that the allowance of the Lord High Commissioner was withdrawn unless he held his Court in Holyrood Palace.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (MR. C. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said he entirely associated himself with the views expressed as to the sentiments of the Scottish people regarding Holyrood and its associations, but he confessed he did not understand why on this not very important matter they should have suggestions about the severance of Church and State, temperance legislation, "on" and "off" licences, and slights on the Scottish national character and historical associations. He was sure that no one would less desire to put any slight upon the Church of Scotland, or upon the historical associations of the Scottish people, than Lord Leven and Melville. He was the more satisfied of that in view of the historical connection of Lord Leven's family with the office he now held. The situation, he thought, had been quite fairly described by the hon. Member for Ramsey. He noticed that the Vote they were now dealing with was put thus—

> "Holyrood Palace—Sanitary Improvement, £3,700. A very thorough overhaul and rectification of the drainage is necessary according to the report from the Board's principal architect in Scotland."

He thought the condition of the drains went no further than that they were not quite up-to-date. Lord Leven and Melville's position was this, that while these works were in contemplation and in progress, and entirely as a temporary measure, and not in the least degree to sever the connection between Holyrood and the pageant connected with the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, he should take the next best alternative by residing in what was undoubtedly the newest hotel in Edinburgh, and therefore, he supposed, the most up-to-date, and, so far as he remembered, one of the nearest, if not the nearest, to Holyrood Palace. It was quite plain it was out of the question that they should, as suggested by Mr. Shaw, express disapproval of the action of the Lord High Commissioner or give orders as to where he was to reside. So far as his recollection served him, there was no item of salary attached to the office of Lord High Commissioner, but a certain amount was allowed for entertainments—which amount he understood was very inadequate so far as the actual expenditure was concerned. He hoped the Scottish Members and the Committee generally would accept the assurance that there was not on the part of the Government, and certainly not on the part of the Lord High Commissioner, any desire to cast a slight upon Scottish feeling in this matter, and that when the necessary operations have been carried through the old practice will be reverted to.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said that he should like to say how the matter struck him. The statement of the Solicitor-General left the matter in all that mystery to which his hon. friend referred. They had had no explanation whatever. Surely there was something under the surface here. [A VOICE: Drainage, and Laughter.] He admitted that his phrase had a larger meaning than he intended. What there was under the surface had existed in Holyrood for a considerable length of time, and Lord Leven and Melville had been Lord High Commissioner two or three times, so that he was well aware of the condition of things. It must be borne in mind, too, that Lord Leven and Melville only occupied Holyrood for a short time, perhaps not more than a fortnight in the year. During the remainder of the year the Palace was at the disposal of the Board of Works to set things right. There should be no possibility of the interruption of any function by the Board of Works setting things right. What he wanted to know was whether the Lord High Commissioner had complained of the state of Holyrood before this year, and whether he had complained of the action of the Board of Works. If the state of things was so bad as to at all justify him in taking this step, then the Board of Works ought to have corrected what was amiss during the time at their disposal. In this year they were taking money to repair and renew what required repair and renewal, and until this was done Lord Leven and Melville was reluctant to take up his residence in Holyrood Palace. An explanation was clearly required of the action, or rather the inaction, of the Board of Works. That the Board of Works should delay putting Holyrood Palace into a habitable condition until the very fortnight in the year when it was required for a public function which was of immemorial habit, and which excited a great deal of interest among the Scottish people, required some explanation. As regarded the coming year, Scotland was now particularly happy, because they had not only a Scottish Chancellor of the Exchequer but a Scottish Financial Secretary to the Treasury, whom they were glad to see in that office. He had no doubt that under the watchful eye of the new Financial Secretary similar neglect of Holyrood would not occur again, and that the new Secretary would be willing to spend any money required in order to put the ancient residence of the Royal House of Scotland in good condition. But they wanted an explanation of the neglect of the Board of Works to put Holyrood House into a fit state to receive Lord Leven and his household, and to be the scene of the festivities and the ceremonies which usually occurred at this time of year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he did not think that Scottish Members would derive any advantage from pressing this matter to a division, as the only result would be that the money would not be expended at all. He understood that the real delinquent, if there were one, was Lord Leven himself. Here he should also like to congratulate Mr. Elliot in his double capacity of Scotsman and Financial Secretary, and, he might add, as Liberal Unionist. Lord Leven was also a Scotsman, and after he had accepted this State appointment he had found that his duties required him to expose himself to the risk of typhoid in an insanitary Scottish castle. Although he held that Lord Leven ought to sacrifice himself on the altar of his country on this occasion, there certainly remained the question why these drains were not altered sooner. He had always understood that the proper time to overhaul sanitary arrangements was the winter. [Mr. ANSTRUTHER: Not in Scotland, and Laughter.] However, it was clear that a most inopportune moment had been chosen for the work.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) associated himself with the remarks of preceding speakers on the Opposition side of the House. Even after the explanation which had been given there was no guarantee that the drainage of Holyrood would be put in proper order. The question was whether sufficient money would be expended to make Holyrood Palace habitable, not only for the Lord High Commissioner, but for His Majesty, who was so soon to visit Edinburgh, and who they all hoped would repeat his visit. There really seemed to be a conspiracy on the part of the Front Government Bench to stifle national sentiment north of the Tweed. They first of all found utter callousness to Scottish sentiment regarding the numerals of the Royal title, and now they found an attempt to divorce from the sittings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland the time-honoured custom of the Lord High Commissioner's residence in Holyrood.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) thought the Committee ought to be informed why this drainage had not been attended to at an earlier stage. He deplored the fact that the Lord High Commissioner should seek to change his quarters, and to hold his courts at a public-house instead of in the Palace at Holyrood, and he hoped the Government would give an assurance that it should not happen after this year.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) agreed with the hon. Member for Banffshire that there was nothing more to be deplored than the loss of sound national sentiment, but he was bound to say that "sound national sentiment" occasionally broke out in most unexpected places. It had never occurred to him until this afternoon that the fact that the High Commissioner thought it safer, in the existing condition of the drains at Holyrood, to live in an hotel, would have been the cause of an outbreak of national sentiment. Most Members probably had experience of the extremely inconvenient season at which those with whom they were connected found it impossible to live in a house because the drains were not in a fit condition. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had said what an inconvenient moment the present was for the drains to go wrong. Had his hon. friend ever known drains to go wrong except at an inconvenient moment?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I said it was an inconvenient moment for putting them right.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he would modify his statement to suit his hon. friend's interruption. Had his hon. friend ever known drains to require to be put right except at inconvenient times? He never had. It was always at the most inconvenient moment that all the arrangements had to be upset in order that the newest improvements in sanitary science might be adopted. A sum of over £3,000 had been placed on the Estimates to put the drains right. Whether that indicated that the drains were in so insanitary a condition that there was serious risk to life in living at Holyrood was not for him to say, but he did not think it would be right to blame the High Commissioner if, when those responsible considered the time had come for the expenditure of £3,000 on the drains, he began to think that possibly it was not the exact moment at which he would desire to take up his residence in the building on which such extensive and costly repairs were required. If it would be any consolation to any of his countrymen to know that the last thing the Government, the High Commissioner, or anybody else, in or out of Scotland, desired was to interfere with these great historic traditions, he was prepared to give the most ample assurances on the point. They would not, however, be paying a judicious tribute to Scottish sentiment if they said it was to take the form of insisting on a high officer of State living in a house which he thought was insanitary. He did not think that was a form of devotion, of sacrificing one's life for one's country, which they could exact from the High Commissioner for Scotland. But when these sanitary arrangements had been completed, when this money had been voted and spent, as he had no doubt it would be, to the best advantage, he trusted the present High Commissioner and his successors would be able, as in the past, to carry out their high functions in the ancient residence of the Kings of Scotland.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the right hon. Gentleman, coming rather late into the discussion, had in a magnanimous way cleared the Government of the imputation of desiring to expose the Scottish people to a direct insult. But no one had ever supposed that the Government had any such desire. What had been urged was that this was a piece of mismanagement on the part of a Department of the Government, because Lord Leven, whose knowledge of Holyrood as a habitable house was derived from the experience of past years, had doubtless represented the condition of affairs to the Board of Works. No doubt while in residence there he was in constant communication with the Board of Works.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he understood that that was not so.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN thought that in that case Lord Leven must be ruled out of court, if he had not suffered it was difficult to see where his cause was for going to the hotel. He assumed, because a Vote was placed on the Estimates, that the Board of Works, on the representation of the only man who lived at the Palace, had come to the conclusion that the drainage was imperfect. If so, they had had some months in which to put the matter right, but had deliberately postponed doing so until the time came for the place to be wanted again. That was the point upon which no information had been given, and it was a piece of maladministration which deserved the attention of the Committee.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.) said that the Prime Minister in excusing Lord Leven for not occupying Holyrood Palace had lost sight of the fact that Levées would continue to be held there. If the Palace was as insanitary as had been represented nothing could be worse than to ask people from all parts of Scotland to attend these Levées, as there would be far more danger with the large crowds that would then gather than if Lord Leven simply resided at Holyrood. Moreover the King was to hold a Levée at the Palace in May, and the same danger would be then present. Since the death of Queen Victoria there had been ample opportunity for putting the place in a perfect sanitary condition. He did not begrudge the expenditure of money, but the building had been in an insanitary condition for years past, and ought to have been seen to long ago. A question might also arise with regard to Lord Leven holding his dinners at an hotel. As he understood, excise duties were not levied on spirituous liquors in Royal Palaces. If, however, Lord Leven had his dinners at an hotel, would he have to pay duty on his liquors, being on licensed premises, or would he have the same privileges in this respect as in the Palace?

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said that as far as he knew the High Commissioner had never made any formal complaint at all. As regarded the inaction of the Board of Works he thought it was a little hard to blame them, they sent a Surveyor a few months ago to inspect the drains, and they were found not to be as up-to-date as they should be; consequently they proposed to spend the sum for this purpose which now appeared in the Estimates.

MR. JOHN DEWAR asked leave to withdraw his Amendment. [Cries of "No, no."]

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 61; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 61.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Asher, Alexander
Bell, Richard
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Channing, Francis Allston
Crombie, John William
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Ellis, John Edward
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Furness, Sir Christopher
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tydvil*
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Jones, William (*Carn'rvonshire*
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—
Mr. Eugene Wason and
Mr. Black.

NOES.

gg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Balfour, Rt. Hn A. J. (*Man'r.*
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Glasgow*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A. (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michl. (*Lond. Univ*
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc.*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T
Hobhouse, Rt. Hn H (*Som'rs't E*
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgo*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinb'rgh W*
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Malcolm, Ian
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mount, William Arthur
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Penn, John

Mr. Caldwell.

Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Seely, Charles Hilton, (*Lincoln*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, RtHnJ Powell-(*Birm*
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Noes.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that recently attention had been called to acts of vandalism at Hampton Court Palace, the most serious being in connection with valuable pictures and old tapestries, which had been badly injured. It was rather remarkable that the injury to these tapestries was not discovered by the custodian of that particular part of the building where they were kept, but the damage was pointed out by a visitor. He mentioned this fact to show that the supervision was not what it ought to be. He wished to know if those rooms had been closed to the public in consequence of those acts. He had been told that the custodians at Hampton Court were very old men, and if so, he thought it was time they were pensioned off. It would only be an act of grace to do this, and then they might put younger men in their places who would be able to look after these things. The electric trams were now taking a great many more people to Hampton Court than in former years, and it was a great pity that any of those rooms should be closed to the public. Perhaps his hon. friend would give them some assurance that the rooms would be opened again. He thought that proper steps should be taken to see that these treasures were properly protected, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee what steps he proposed to take to ensure that the national treasures there should be protected. At the same time he did not think that the public should be deprived of the pleasure of visiting those rooms.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked if some of the works of art had been removed from Hampton Court Palace to other places.

*Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said reference had been made to the necessity for inquiring into the mutilation of the art treasures at Hampton Court. He ventured to anticipate that the official report would confirm what he himself could state—namely, that the accounts of the damage done had been grossly exaggerated. He was under the impression that some of the newspapers that had written about vandalism had not taken the trouble to inquire into the facts. It was the practice of some newspapers to endeavour to secure accuracy, but the ordinary sensational newspaper did not trouble itself about that at all. He went to Hampton Court and saw the Clerk of Works, of whom he inquired as to the damage which was reported in the newspapers. That official very kindly took him to the damaged Holbein. He expected to see the picture damaged beyond recognition, but on looking at that fine picture of Henry VIII. he found that the damage had been grossly overstated. There had obviously been the movement of a pencil across the face, and he suggested to the official that it had probably been done by an irate and religious fanatic, or by some irritated female who had certain views on matrimony — on which King Henry VIII. was not the most distinguished authority—probably out of resentment. History only gave him six wives, and so she was determined to revenge herself upon his portrait, but beyond the enamel being scratched there was little damage done to that particular picture. In regard to the tapestry he thought the public should not be held responsible for the damage at all, so far as concerned the piece he saw. He believed it was accidentally caused by one of the attendants putting a stool over the rail in front of it. The damage was very trivial and not irreparable, and it did not warrant the public being excluded from these particular rooms. If Henry VIII, or his portrait, was the cause of indignation on the part of religious fanatics or women with pronounced views on the rights of women or matrimony, the proper course was to place the picture where it could not be reached by an umbrella or a pencil. If that were done the public might be safely allowed to go to the rooms which they were now prohibited from entering.

If there was one agreeable feature about the public galleries and musems it was the singular absence of damage done by the public over a large number of years. He had the honour of sitting on a Committee, of which the hon. Member for Wigan was chairman, that inquired into matters relating to the public galleries and museums, and they were informed that for forty-two years at one London museum, so far as the public was concerned, there had been absolutely no damage done to any object. He thought, therefore, that to exclude the public would not meet the circumstances of the case. The hon. Member for Devonport had suggested that if damage was inflicted the attendants ought to be held responsible for it. He believed that the attendants had been held responsible for it, but it was impossible to guarantee immunity from damage if there was only one attendant for two rooms. Personally, he thought they had quite a sufficient number of attendants in all the galleries and museums. Unless they were to have an attendant for each room it was impossible to prevent occasional acts of damage by fanatics such as he had described. Although some of the attendants at Hampton Court were old, he believed they were competent and painstaking, and did their duties well. One advantage of having elderly men was that they were not drawn away from their duties by housemaids on the walks, or attractive young ladies promenading the galleries. They had got beyond that stage. He suggested that during the next month or two the authorities responsible for the preservation of the pictures and other things should employ one or two women detectives. "*Cherchez la femme.*" He believed a woman was at the bottom of this. He hoped the First Commissioner of Works would not shut these rooms any longer to the public. He saw no reason or justification for the removal of paintings or statuary from Hampton Court.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES said he was happy to be able to state that the reports as to damage to pictures and tapestry had been largely exaggerated. There was no doubt that some damage had been done, and Lord Windsor took the earliest opportunity of trying to find out who the authors of these dastardly outrages were. The hon. Member for Battersea had suggested that female detectives should be employed to find out who had done these acts. Detectives were placed in Hampton Court Palace, but they were unable to detect who the people were who did them. After that the Office of Works determined to make some little alterations with regard to the warders in the Palace. They established a system of signing on and off among the warders and cleaners so as to fix responsibility. The sale of guide books and other things in the Palace by the warders had been forbidden except at the entrance, and the profit on such sales, instead of going to one or two of them, was to be applied for the benefit of all. Visitors were not to be allowed to carry umbrellas, parasols, sticks, and other things into the rooms under any pretence whatever. It was perfectly true that three of the rooms had been closed, but only temporarily. It was not intended to close them long. The passages were in the shape of an L, and when there was an enormous crowd in the rooms the warders were unable to see what was taking place in two of the small rooms at the end. Possibly in the course of a short time extra warders might be employed, and those rooms would be opened again to the general public. With regard to the question asked by the hon. Member for King's Lynn as to the removal of pictures he believed there had been a few pictures removed to Kew and Kensington Palaces. He could assure the Committee that the First Commissioner of Works was fully alive to the necessity of taking the greatest care of the national treasures. He hoped that this was the last they would hear of these outrages.

Mr. KEARLEY asked for a definite assurance that the rooms would be opened to the public. If there were not sufficient warders it would be the easiest thing possible to appoint the number required to protect the rooms which were now closed.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES: Of course the hon. Member knows that I am not in the Office of Works. I shall put his views before Lord Windsor.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said that he wished for some explanation of the increase in Section A of this Vote, which increase amounted to 100 per cent., that was from £3,600 to £7,050. Of course he was aware that there was a foot-note showing that the major part of this increase was due to expenditure on Osborne House and gardens, but, curiously enough, there was another foot-note showing that £2,100 of that Vote was for food and medical comforts. How came it that that amount was included under the head "Salaries, Wages, and Allowances?" This Vote should be strictly confined to the expenditure on Royal Palaces, and the item to which he referred should be put in its proper place and for its proper purpose. This led him to emphasise a remark which he had made last year. Why was page 6 left a blank, and all details of information regarding this Vote, which used to appear on that page, withdrawn? Last year he had raised a protest against the practice, but had got no satisfaction. There was no authority from the House to leave out those items on page 6. If that page were filled up, as it used to be previous to two years ago, it would have been possible for any one to tell in a moment what was the real meaning of this increase of 100 per cent. on Item A of this Vote. Then on Item E, "Maintenance and Repairs," there was an increase of £8,020 or, roughly speaking, 25 per cent. He wished to call attention to the very serious manner in which this Vote was increasing year by year. In 1890 it amounted to £49,000, which had before that period seldom varied from year to year. But in 1902 it had risen to £59,000 and there was in addition a Supplementary Vote of no less than £41,000. That, of course, was due to the death of Her late Majesty and the change of occupation of the Royal Palaces. The Committee could perfectly well understand that Supplementary Vote, but it ought not to have been accompanied by an annual increase in the cost of the maintenance of the Royal Palaces. Last year the Vote was, as he had said, £59,000: this year it was £82,190. Surely such a large increase ought to be explained by the Government before the Committee was asked to agree to this Vote.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that the item, "Osborne House and gardens," which figured in the Estimates for the first time for a sum of no less than £20,100, raised a very important question. The Committee would observe that really no explanation was given of this Vote. They were told that it was for "Alterations and Improvements, new lifts, heating, lighting, and water services; and new furniture," but they were not told what these included. He believed that this Vote was required for the first time in order to adapt Osborne House partly to the use of the new Navy Establishment placed there, and partly to adapt it for the purpose of a Convalescent Hospital for the Army.

MR. WHITLEY: It is not a Royal Palace at all.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: As the hon. Gentleman said, it was not a Royal Palace, and this item was not even a Civil Service Estimate. It was partly an Army and partly a Navy Estimate; and it was an abuse of the Estimates to put the item on the Civil Service Estimates. If this item was right in this place then the whole of the expenditure on the Hospital Department of the Army, for instance, or of the Education Department of the Navy should also be there. His contention was that this item was most improperly placed under this Vote for Royal Palaces and he could not conceive by whose authority it had been included in the Civil Service Votes. He should like to know what sort of Treasury consent had been asked and obtained for placing this item on this Vote at all. Was it considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer or by the Treasury? If the Secretary to the Treasury could not assure him that this expenditure was for the purpose of maintaining Osborne House as a Royal Palace then he thought he ought to move to reduce the Vote by the whole £20,100 in order to obtain some proper explanation of it. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £20,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said that as regarded the point raised by the hon. Member for Halifax in reference to sub-head A—that increase was due entirely to the salaries and allowances for Osborne House and Gardens; and the same explanation applied to sub-head E. Of course there were other minor charges which came into this Vote owing to the change of occupation; but the main charges in items A and E were for expenditure on Osborne House, the alterations to which, as the Committee knew, were to be effected in order to make it fit for Naval and Military purposes.

MR. CALDWELL said he did not think the explanation of the hon. Gentleman was altogether satisfactory. Under the sub-heading "Osborne House and Gardens—Salaries, Wages and Allowances—£3,500," they found that of that sum £2,100 was for food and medical comforts. That sum was obviously misplaced altogether. This Vote illustrated what the gift of Osborne House and Grounds cost the nation. Certainly if Osborne House was to be on the Estimates at all it should be under some other heading, so that the Committee might know exactly what was the cost of the buildings or the alterations thereon, and how much was to be voted for the food and medical comforts to convalescent patients. It was an entirely novel thing to put such a charge on such a Vote. He supposed that Osborne House was given for the purpose of a sanatorium for officers of the Army, their wives and families. That might be all very right, but at the same time there was no reason why the expense should be borne by the Office of Works.

MR. KEARLEY said that the Committee ought to have some further reply to the point raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. At the present moment Osborne House was being used in a dual capacity—first as a Convalescent Home for Officers of the Army and their wives and families, and, secondly, largely as a naval educational college. If these were purposes to which it was to be put, it was very evident that this was not the place in which it should be placed on the Estimates. The Committee ought to have a clear understanding as to what was to be the future character of this Vote. He agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that this Vote should be divided in proper proportions as between the Navy and the Army Vote.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he also wished to congratulate his hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury on his appointment; and he hoped his hon. friend would be able to give the Committee some further information on the question which had been raised. The argument of his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn appeared to him to be unassailable; certainly there had been no attempt to answer it. The amount referred to was not Civil Service expenditure at all, and should not appear on the Civil Service Estimates. It was expenditure partly for the Navy, and partly for the Army; and it would be impossible for the Committee to have control over Navy and Army expenditure if the various items were found scattered about among the Civil Service Estimates. He hoped the Committee would be given an assurance that if this amount appeared through inadvertence on this Vote this y ar, such a financial error would not be committed another year.

MR. WHITLEY asked how could a sum of £2,100 for food and medical comforts be put down under the heading of Royal Palaces. When Osborne House was handed over to the nation it ceased to be a Royal Palace, and therefore the sum he mentioned was obviously out of place. He thought the Treasury would be well advised to withdraw the Estimate, and bring it up in an amended form.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said before his hon. friend replied he wished to ask about two other points. There was an item for £500 for furniture for Osborne House which needed explanation. He was informed that a great deal of furniture had been taken away from Osborne House, and removed to other parts of the country. That might explain why the sum of £500 for furniture was now asked for. He wished further to call attention to the note on page 5, which showed that the £20,100 would only be a small portion of the amount the Committee might be asked to vote in future years. They were told in the note that "the balance of £7,400 cannot, however, be treated as a measure of the annual ordinary expenses, as only a part of a year's charge will fall within the period of this year's Vote." Therefore, the Vote next year might be £30,000 or £40,000 or £50,000. That added to the importance of his contention that this was not the proper place for this amount. The matter was important because it falsified the Army and Navy accounts. As regarded the item for furniture, he understood that although it was the late Queen's wish that no furniture should be removed from Osborne House, a large amount of furniture had been removed. He definitely asked his hon. friend if that was true; and, if true, what had become of the furniture.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said that the Motion of his hon. friend placed him in a position of considerable difficulty as a member of the Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee had always insisted as a matter of the first importance that all expenditure on a particular service should be included in the Estimates for that service, and should not be included in any other Estimates. It appeared that Osborne House was now devoted to three different objects. In one respect it was a Royal Palace; in another respect it fulfilled certain services for the Army; and in a third certain services for the Navy. It seemed to him that unless it could be shown that the amount in question applied solely to that portion of Osborne House which was still a Royal Palace it had no right to be on the Estimates before the Committee. It was obvious that services for the Army and the Navy should appear on the Army and Navy Estimates; and he thought that his hon. friend would do well to accept the suggestion that the Estimate should be withdrawn for the time being. His hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury had only been a few days in office and could not be expected to be cognisant of all the details of the Estimates.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said that the sum of £500 was for the repair and replacement of furniture, table requisites, etc. As to why the Vote for Osborne House appeared on the Civil Service Estimates and not on the Army and Navy Estimates, the reason was that the whole management of Osborne House was under the Office of Works. If, however, it were thought desirable, the Vote would not again be included in the Vote for the Royal Palaces.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not regard the explanation as satisfactory.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 70; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 62.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Asher, Alexander
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Crombie, John William
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, William (*Carn'rvonshire*
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Lambert, George
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall

Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Partington, Oswald
Philipps, John Wynford
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES :—
Mr. Gibson Bowles and
Mr. J. H. Whitley.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H F (*Middlesex*
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (*Glasgow*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. *Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Grenfell, William Henry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (*Somrst E*
Hope, J. F. (*Sheffield, Brightside*
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kimber, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ridley, Hon. M. W (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. S. (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES :—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £51,400, to complete the sum for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he wished to renew under more favourable conditions a protest he had already made to the abolition at Kensington of an open space which had long been enjoyed by the people of London. The piece of land to which he referred was a strip which ran down by the side of Kensington Gardens, the trees upon which formed one of the most agreeable avenues in that part of London. When recently going there, however, he found notices up that this ground had been pegged out to various occupants, for building purposes, at the instance of the Board of Works, with the result that another of these enjoyable open spaces would be for ever lost.

*The CHAIRMAN: To which park does the hon. Member allude?

Dr. FARQUHARSON said he referred to a piece of land which formed a portion of Kensington Gardens.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, on a point of order, said he believed that this ground did not come under the Office of Works at all, but was under the control of the Office of Woods and Forests.

*The CHAIRMAN said his impression was that this ground formed no portion of Kensington Gardens, and it was only on the hon. Member's assurance that it did that he allowed the hon. Member to continue. It was no doubt Crown property, but it was managed by the Office of Woods and Forests.

Mr. KEARLEY complained of the disgraceful condition of the Birdcage Walk roadway, and the annoyance caused by repairing being undertaken during the session time.

Mr. SKEWES-COX (Surrey, Kingston) was understood to say he wished to draw attention to the dangerous condition of the Kingston Gate of Richmond Park, and the necessity of its being widened, as, owing to the height of the walls and the narrowness of the gate and the roads in that neighbourhood, the dangers arising from motor cars using that gate were very great. He also asked that paths should be made to the roads in the park.

Mr. BELL (Derby) said he did not know whether the matter to which he desired to refer came within this Vote, but he desired to ask whether the temporary building at the corner of Trafalgar Square was to be the site of a permanent station of the Waterloo and Baker Street Railway.

*The CHAIRMAN: Trafalgar Square is neither a Royal Park nor pleasure garden.

Mr. BELL: No, Sir, but it is an open space.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES said he had seen Lord Windsor with reference to the widening of Kingston Gate and the paths into Richmond Park, and hoped to be able to give the hon. Member an answer in a few days. As to Birdcage Walk, it was true the road was in a very bad state. The reason it was not done at the usual time of the year was that, in consequence of the autumn sittings of Parliament, the Office of Works did not care to undertake it then. It had got so bad, however, that last Tuesday they determined to commence operations, but it was hoped the work would not take longer than a fortnight or three weeks. Further, it was proposed at some future time to lay down wood paving.

Sir A. HAYTER (Walsall) asked whether the positions of park keepers, and so forth, in the Royal Parks were confined to pensioners.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES did not think the positions were confined to pensioners, but they were given a preference. He would, however, make inquiries on the subject.

Mr. WHITLEY pointed out that £12,929 were taken under this Vote for Kew Gardens, and Vote 11, under the Board of Agriculture, included another £18,716 for the same place. Last year Kew Gardens were transferred from the Office of Works to the Board of Agriculture; therefore he could not quite understand why both Departments should be asking for these large sums. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would explain where the line was drawn between the expenditure of the two Departments.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES explained that the Vote now before the Committee was for the upkeep of the buildings furniture, and so forth, which still remained under the Office of Works.

MR. WHITLEY asked whether in future the Office of Works was to be the landlord, and the Board of Agriculture the tenant.

MR. AILYWN FELLOWES said the Office of Works would look after the buildings only.

Vote agreed to.

3. £27,700, to complete the sum for Houses of Parliament Buildings.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS drew attention to the position allotted to the statue of the late Mr. Bright. The Committee would remember that the original statue of the statesman was placed in the Central Lobby on a pedestal now occupied by the statue of the late Mr. Gladstone. Had the statue of Mr. Bright been at all satisfactory it would doubtless have remained in its original position, but, as the Committee knew, it was little less than a libel on the right hon. Gentleman, and it was subsequently removed. A new statue had been provided——

THE CHAIRMAN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman's point was that some site should be provided.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Some different site.

THE CHAIRMAN said that was a matter of discretion resting with the First Commissioner of Works. There was no charge in the Estimate in respect of any piece of ground upon which this statue was placed. Therefore he thought the right hon. Gentleman should raise the point on the salary of the First Commissioner.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he would do so.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) called attention to the ventilating apparatus in the library, which, when the weather was at all cold, made the room extremely draughty. He hoped the matter would be looked into, so that the temperature of the library might be more carefully adjusted.

*MR. CUMMING MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) thought the smoking-room for strangers was unworthy of the House of Commons. By a little extra expenditure the room might be made into a very useful convenience to Members who may wish to entertain their friends visiting them at the House. The strangers' smoking room is much too small for the accommodation of the largely-increased number of visitors attending them. All the extra room needed can be had at a small outlay. The three arches can be cut out into the adjoining passage behind them, the cramped-up bar at the entrance can be removed, and a large, commodious bar inserted at the back of the opposite wall. Curtains and carpets, or kamptulican or cocoa-nut matting, would make the place much more comfortable and convenient. At present the room would be a disgrace to a second-class hotel, and certainly is not a fit one for the House of Commons.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) reminded the Committee that some time ago a thorough inquiry was made into the accommodation for Members and strangers in the House of Commons, but, as far as he knew, nothing had been done to carry out the practically unanimous recommendations then made. He asked whether there was any intention of carrying out the proposals of that Committee. An alteration urgently required was the enlargement of the Post Office. It was almost impossible at times for Members to get properly looked after, not because the officials were anything but extremely painstaking and courteous, but because the place was too small. The telegraph office was a perfect disgrace to civilisation. He also asked when the new carpet, which had been passed by the Office of Works, was to be placed in the strangers' smoking room.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said that with reference to the Select Committee on Accommodation in the House of Commons, which had been referred to, he thought they must give the Government its due, and it was a little hard to say that they had done nothing in regard to the carrying out of the recommendations contained in the Report of that Committee. Since the present Financial Secretary to the War Office went round the kitchen department and smashed the windows with his umbrella, windows had been put in that would open. He also thought that the telegraph office had been made a great deal better. With regard to the smoking room, he should like to know what the improvements which had been referred to really were, for he noticed the same old draughts and stuffiness in the atmosphere of the smoking room.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he did not think the House had been fairly treated in regard to the increased accommodation which had been promised. They were told that hon. Members were going to get some advantage from the increased accommodation, but he had failed to find it. The Members' reading room was nothing less than a scandal, for it was really nothing more than a passage. In the reading room they were really between the devil and the deep sea, for they must either go to the cold windows or else stand in front of the fire, and the accommodation was simply absurd. They had been told that the House of Commons was the best club in the world, and although he was not acquainted with many clubs he could safely say that the House of Commons was the worst club he knew of. After the promises which had been made he really thought hon. Members would have derived some benefit from the increased accommodation in the House.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) suggested the adoption of similar arrangements in regard to letters to those in force in the American assembly, where it was possible for any member entering the room to see if there was any letter for him in his own pigeonhole. In this way a great amount of the time of hon. Members could be saved. As far as the smoking room was concerned it certainly was a very great inconvenience. He thought they ought to have a smoking room on the same floor as the dining-room.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked whether the Government intended to appoint the Select Committee on the Ventilation and Sanitary Condition of the House which sat last Session and did not report. As this Committee was carrying on some important investigations in regard to the quality of the air in the House he should like to know what the result of these investigations was. His hon. friend would remember that when this Vote was under discussion last year complaints were made about the way the House was cleaned, and objection was taken to the divided jurisdiction upon this subject. It appeared that one set of servants were under the Office of Works and another set under the Sergeant-at-Arms; consequently there was occasionally friction and the work was not so well carried out as it might be. He wished to know if his hon. friend proposed to allow all the servants to work under a single authority.

*DR. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye) said that as a new Member he wished to know whether enough lockers to go round were provided for hon. Members. He came to the House as an absolute stranger and he was told that he must put his name down for a locker. He had done so, but it struck him that he would have to wait one or two Sessions before his turn came round. He thought hon. Members should have proper accommodation provided for them.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said that with regard to the lockers he would communicate with the Office of Works, for he thought that every hon. Member should be provided with a locker. With reference to the question raised by the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire he might say that the First Commissioner of Works intended to appoint the Select Committee on Ventilation at an early date. The hon. Member for Clare rather called into question the action of the Office of Works for not having taken notice of the recommendations of the Committee on Accommodation in the House. He thought that was hardly fair, because in last year's Estimates provision was made for carrying out some of the Committee's recommendations. It was true that in regard to the larger sums to be expended in connection with the smoking room and the dining-room the Office of Works did not feel justified in asking for the £14,000 or £15,000 which would be required to make the necessary alterations. This year there was £1,000 taken for five of the Peers' Committee Rooms, £250 for improving the ventilation of the lavatories and the smoking room and tea room of the House of Commons, £1,050 for altering the smoke shafts, and £300 for works and alterations of a minor character. He was afraid that he could not promise that the larger works necessary to provide increased accommodation in the dining-room and smoking room would be undertaken at the present time. He felt sure that the First Commissioner would look into the matter and carry out the suggestions of the Committee as far as possible. With regard to the reading room, which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Bolton, the same question was brought forward some time ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, but he was of opinion that the room had been made more suitable than it was before. At the same time he agreed that the accommodation in the reading room was far from what it ought to be, and he hoped to see the day when some alteration would be made not only in the reading room but also in the smoking room.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the hon. Member would tell them something about the Post Office accommodation?

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES said he thought some alterations had been made in the Post Office and Telegraph Office, but he would bear the point in mind and bring it before the Department.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he was sorry to hear that nothing was to be done in regard to the smoking room which was often cramped to suffocation while the House was perhaps nearly empty. There was really nothing like the proper amount of accommodation necessary for the class of hon Members who could not exist without a cigarette or a cigar. The necessity for increased smoking room accommodation was far greater now, more especially in regard to those who wished to smoke and write at the same time. There was nothing like enough tables for this purpose. He estimated that nineteen out of twenty hon. Members of the House desired to smoke when they were away from the fascination of the oratory of the House of Commons itself. Probably there were some Members who thought there should be no smoking at all, but they were an infinitesimal minority in the House. He was exceedingly disappointed to hear his hon. friend say that nothing was to be done for the down-trodden smokers. He hoped that the matter would be reconsidered.

Vote agreed to.

4. £36,120, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain.

5. £30,150, to complete the sum for Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain.

6. £37,500, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he desired to ask a question in regard to the cemeteries of British soldiers in the Ionian Islands. He had again and again called attention to the fact that the Government of Greece proposed to give a lease of one of the British cemeteries to a company who proposed to establish a gaming place there. During the British occupation of the Ionian Islands, some distinguished men lived there, some of whom died and were buried there. It seemed to him to be nothing short of an outrage and a scandal to set up a gaming place over the remains of those distinguished and gallant men. He had never received, up to this time, any explicit assurance that the thing would be prevented. That His Majesty's Government could prevent it was most undoubted, because we had the ground of these cemeteries conceded to us by treaty. He wished to receive some assurance that this would be absolutely prevented; otherwise, he would have to move a reduction of the Vote.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said he understood that in Corfu there was an attempt by some people to set up a casino, and the Foreign Office took steps to protest against this proposed desecration. He hoped that, in the course of a short time, they would come to some satisfactory arrangement.

MR. WHITLEY called attention to what appeared to be an anomaly—namely, that while they charged no rates on diplomatic buildings within our shores, they voted money for rates on the self-same class of buildings for our representatives in foreign countries. On a former occasion a promise was given that this matter should be looked into. It was obviously a matter for a little arrangement, possibly by the Foreign Office. They should decline to pay rates on the Embassy in Paris when no rates were paid on the French Embassy in London.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) said they were asked to vote £800 for the maintenance of cemeteries abroad, but no information was given as to the state they were kept in. He should like some information as to whether the cemeteries were kept in proper order.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said the Office of Works got a report once and sometimes twice a year.

GENERAL LAURIE: Are they examined and found to be satisfactory?

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES: I believe so.

MR. WHITLEY said the hon. Member had not replied to his question. He only wished the matter to be looked into. He would take the opportunity of raising the question on another Vote. It was stated in a recent debate that while we paid rates on our Embassy in Berlin the German Embassy in London was exempted from rates.

Vote agreed to.

7. £339,000, to complete the sum for Revenue Buildings.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said he wished particularly to ascertain whether the Office of Work, was responsible for the sanitary condition of the Post and Telegraph Office buildings, because there had been a good many complaints as to the sanitation of many of them. They did not appear to be under any effective form of inspection such as would be applied to the premises if in private occupation.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said he was almost sure he was correct in saying that the question of the sanitation of these offices came under the Office of Works.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked if inspectors looked after the sanitation of the buildings.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES: Yes, I believe so.

Vote agreed to.

8. £222,000, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

MR. WHITLEY said he wished to raise a protest against an item in this very large Vote. On page 40 they were asked to vote £1,300 for the Land Registry Office for "Alterations consequent on re-arrangement of staff;" he objected to a continual demand being made for increased money for this office, while Parliament was persistently denied any inquiry into the working of the Land Registration Act. It was distinctly understood when the Act was passed that there would be an opportunity — either by Select Committee or otherwise—for an inquiry as to the success of the operation of the Act; and yet the Committee, which had voted no less a sum than £250,000 for a building, were continually asked, year by year, for some other building, or alteration and maintenance of existing buildings, while they had no report whatever which showed whether the operation of the Act had been successful or not.

The CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Member must remember that there was a special Vote for Land Registration, and the question of the policy of the extension or continuance of the Act should be raised on that Vote, and not on this, which was merely for the alteration of the building.

Mr. WHITLEY said that although he had been waiting all last year to raise this question the Vote to which the Chairman referred was closured. It had therefore appeared to him that it must be proper to discuss the question on the Vote for the alterations on the building.

***The CHAIRMAN** said that he did not think so; and for this reason, that the Minister in charge of this Vote had nothing to do with the policy of the Land Registration Act. No doubt if the hon. Member brought pressure to bear in the right quarter he would get the Land Registration Vote brought on at a time when it could be properly discussed.

Vote agreed to.

9. £119,019, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.
10. £14,204, to complete the sum for Harbours under the Board of Trade.
11. £17,980, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

Class II.

12. Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £48,288, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and for Kew Botanic and Pleasure Gardens, including certain Grant-in-Aid."—

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said he should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture on having made arrangements for the introduction into this country of live cattle from Argentina. He knew that that would be a great boon to the great body of the working population of this country. It was quite evident that an increase in the number of live cattle introduced into this country would tend to lower the price of a food which was necessary for the health and the growth of the working community; but it had two additional advantages. By the arrangement made with the Argentine Government it had been possible for the latter to remove the restrictions which existed as to the export of high-class breeding cattle from this country to the Argentine, and the sale and transport of cattle from the Argentine to this country had improved the commercial relations of the two countries, because the more cattle were exported from the Argentine to Great Britain the more iron and cotton goods would be taken from this country to the Argentine. Every good thing, however, had its evil side, and in bringing cattle from the Argentine to Great Britain it was perfectly obvious that a certain amount of suffering on the part of the cattle must take place. He wished the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture would tell the Committee what power he had to prevent unnecessary cruelty in the conduct of the cattle traffic to this country. Some lines, he believed, had steamers expressly built for the trade, and the cattle were protected by shade decks and provided with a constant flow of water. Some of them even had the electric light fitted up. But that protection of the cattle did not exist in all vessels. What means had the right hon. Gentleman for the examination of the ships and the inspection of the cattle on arrival in this country? Then it might also be possible for the right hon. Gentleman to take into consideration the question of the transport of cattle from Irish to British ports. He was given to understand by those who have seen it that there were no means whatever for protecting cattle shipped from Belfast to Fleetwood, and from other Irish to English ports; and they could imagine what must have happened during the last three or four months when the decks of the steamers were swept with seas on account of the strong head winds. He was told that large numbers of the cattle had been found huddled together, many injured and others trampled to death. A check should be put to that. He was perfectly willing to see the number of cattle sent over here from Ireland multiplied, but they were bound to take every precaution which humanity could suggest to secure that the sufferings of the cattle should be as small as possible.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said he thought it would be well to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture to the change in the education of the children of the country, especially in the rural districts, in connection with the Education Act of last year. An opportunity now occurred for the right hon. Gentleman to direct agricultural education into grooves which had not been followed for many years past. There was no doubt that existing agricultural education was in an extremely unsatisfactory condition. They had a hard and fast Code which applied to town and country alike. They should differentiate education in the rural villages and in the towns. In Devonshire, which he represented, a great deal of fruit was grown, and he should like to see taught in the schools fruit-growing, the care of fruit trees, and how to get rid of the insects which injured the fruit trees. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would do a great service to agriculture if he would direct the attention of the County Councils, who had now the duty of carrying out the Education Act, into the groove he had suggested. He had been reading only a few days ago the extremely interesting work by Mr. Rider Haggard on "Rural England," in which that author quoted the opinion of a reverend gentleman in Devonshire on this subject. "There was nothing" it was said, "taught in a village school which would impress on a child that agriculture, horticulture, orchard and fruit culture are full of interest and delight, and both require, and are worthy of, the best work of their heads and hands." He was certain that the right hon. Gentleman could do something to make the village school more attractive to those living in the villages, and the means of imparting knowledge which would be of use to the children in after life; and if he did so it would redound to his lasting credit. The children were taught geography three hours a week, but nothing of how to erect a stack or to feed cattle. It was often said that an agricultural labourer was a very unskilled person, but he should like to traverse that statement absolutely, because anyone without a considerable amount of past experience who tried to do the work of an agricultural labourer would find it difficult. Even the putting up a fence, or ploughing and sowing, required a good deal of technical skill and knowledge, and some of that knowledge might be imparted in the night-schools which he hoped would be established all over the country districts.

This was an important subject, because the rural population was crowding into the towns, where men were tramping about the streets because they could not get work, while in the country there was a scarcity of labour. He attached a great deal of importance to giving children a real practical education in the village schools, rather than an education such as they would get in London or any other large city. With reference to wages, he read during the Woolwich contest that wages at Woolwich were about 21s. per week, and that rents were 8s. a week. If that were true, it seemed to him that the agricultural labourer was much better paid than a Woolwich labourer who had to pay 8s. a week rent; and he could not understand why such a number of people in the rural districts crowded into the towns. The Technical Education Committees all desired to do something to improve agricultural education, but they did not know how to go about it. He suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should form some body in his Department which would send out to County Councils what might well be termed an agricultural code of education. The County Councils wanted to do this work, but they did not know how to do it. The right hon. Gentleman could carry out the ideas of the County Councils in this matter, which he was certain had his sympathy. The right hon. Gentleman had also been very sympathetic on the question of railway rates; but said that farmers indulged in a great deal of general grumbling. He himself agreed with that; but it was difficult for them to do anything else, when they saw railway rates unfairly differentiated between themselves and their foreign competitors. Railway rates were full of difficulties to an ordinary man.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that that is a matter which is connected with the administration of the Board of Agriculture. Railway rates are connected with the Board of Trade.

MR. LAMBERT said he only wished to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should appoint a competent staff in his Department to examine into the question of railway rates. It was impossible for an individual farmer to examine railway rates, as they were very complicated and full of details; and no man who was not skilled in the matter of railway charges would be able to ascertain exactly whether his charges were accurate or not. In Ireland, rich men came forward patriotically to carry out great transport ideas; but in England they had no rich men, or else they were not patriotic. He also thought that the Treasury ought to devote more money to the Agricultural Department. At present, the Department was the most poverty-stricken in the world, considering the large industry it had to direct and advise. Mr. W. P. Reeves, Agent-General for New Zealand, some time ago compiled a table showing the amount spent on agricultural advice in various countries in the world. In New Zealand the amount was 2s. per head, in Queensland, 1s. 11d., in France, 11d., in Denmark, which was a very severe competitor with the British agriculturist, 1s. 6d., whereas, in the United Kingdom only ½d. per head was spent. He therefore thought that more money should be given to the Agricultural Department to carry out necessary work such as he had suggested. The right hon. Gentleman was reported to have said that it was to gain markets that they made wars, spent millions of money, and the life blood of the bravest of the brave. He did not want that; but he thought, considering they had a very large home market, that, instead of looking so much to foreign markets, they should try and preserve it for the British agriculturist. If the British farmer had to meet foreign competition, he should be put in a position to meet it; and one of the chief remedies for foreign competition was better and more practical education. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make representations to the Treasury in order to get more money for a purpose which was very vital to the agricultural industry.

He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman one or two questions. He understood that swine fever at the present time showed a very large decrease. He congratulated the Department on that; but he wished to know if there was going to be any finality as regarded the restrictions for suppressing swine fever. Had the right hon. Gentleman any idea as to when they might anticipate that swine fever would be stamped out altogether? That would be a very great boon, if it could be achieved. He thought also that the right hon. Gentleman might supply information more frequently with reference to the course of agricultural events in foreign countries. He read in *The Economist* a few days ago that the Argentine herds had increased only about 6 per cent. during the last three years, whereas, the normal increase was from 20 per cent to 30 per cent. That showed that from the Argentine, at all events, they would not get so much competition in the near future as might have been expected. He read also that cattle in America showed a decrease of six millions. These were things about which the Agricultural Board ought to be able to supply information. Then, there was the question of the drought in Australia. How was that going to affect the price of wool and mutton? In agriculture they could not change the system of production as quickly as it could be changed in other industries, and all these matters were of importance. He also wished to know what prospect there was of sending stock to South Africa. Two years ago, they were told that there were great latent possibilities in sending British stock to improve the native breeds in South Africa. He himself was rather dubious as to whether there would be a market for that class of stock; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee some information on the matter.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) said he wished to bring one or two points to the attention of his right hon. friend. One was the question of putting the law into force with reference to glanders. At present, no notification of glanders was necessary, and a farmer was able to put a horse suffering from glanders into a sale with other horses. He was informed some years ago that the law was strong enough to cope with such outrages; and he hoped it would be enforced. Then as to drinking troughs, they were not under the control of the local authority, and were frequently insanitary, and even when carmen were provided with buckets they were compelled to dip them into the troughs because there were no taps. He desired to identify himself with what the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had said on the question of railway rates; and he would welcome a Department of the Board of Agriculture that would inform farmers what rates they ought to pay. The railway companies were at present infringing Acts of Parliament by imposing rates which they were not empowered to impose. By Act of Parliament, the maximum price of manures from Petersfield to Nine Elms was 9s., but the railway company charged 12s. 6d. The maximum charge for potatoes from Three Bridges was 3s. 8d., but the railway company charged 10s. 10d.

*THE CHAIRMAN: These matters are not under the control of the Board of Agriculture. The Board of Agriculture has no right to interfere with railway companies in respect of rates. It is a matter for the law if the railway companies are charging illegal rates.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR said he appreciated that point, and would only urge on his right hon. friend to have a Department under his control where farmers could be informed what rates they ought to pay. At present, they were absolutely ignorant on the matter, in consequence of the Board of Agriculture not supplying them with the information with which it ought to have supplied them. He was sure his right hon. friend had great sympathy with farmers in the matter, and that he intended to do his best to remedy the evil. The result of all these preferential rates on food supplies amounted to no less than a bounty to foreigners of 5s. a ton on grain, and of from 10s. to 30s. a ton in regard to fruit and other produce. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture would have in his office in the future a Department for remedying all these defects.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said everybody appreciated the efforts of the right hon. Gentleman to protect our herds from foreign disease, and recognised that he had done well in that direction, but there were other matters with regard to which the people were not so satisfied. They felt aggrieved that foreign produce was carried cheaper than English produce, and thought that something might be done to alleviate that grievance. The argument of the railway companies that they were enabled to take foreign produce cheaper because of the bulk they carried was a sound one, but could not the right hon. Gentleman make some arrangement with the railway companies whereby small consignments, if accumulated in bulk, should be charged the rates which were charged for foreign produce? Another matter to which he wished to draw attention—and he admitted the difficulty of dealing with it—was that the variety of weights and measures by which produce was sold resulted in great confusion and prevented a free interchange of these commodities. He urged the desirability of evolving a uniform system of weights and measures, which would greatly relieve the farmers of the difficulties under which they now suffered. They should also have greater facilities for analysing manures and feeding stuffs, and he suggested that the Board of Agriculture should be able to supply a simpler process by which the farmer could be assured as to whether the goods he bought were of money value or not. He further suggested the desirability of inspecting stallions and preventing the use of diseased or unsound animals. He was of opinion that all stallions used for stud purposes should have a certificate of soundness and facilities should be given for breeding good sound horses such as they heard were required for the Army. Agriculturists did not want to be pampered, but they wanted facilities given to them to carry on their industry, not only for the benefit of themselves and the rural community but in the interest of the community at large and for the promotion of the food supply and the commonwealth of the country.

*MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding) said he moved the Amendment standing in his name, not because he was not in agreement with the hon. Member who had just sat down, but because, although the farmers were delighted with the way the President of the Board travelled the country and inquired into their grievances, they did not seem to appreciate that in the Board of Agriculture they had a live Department. As compared with what similar Departments abroad did, we were leagues behind. And the farmers could not help remembering that the right hon. Gentleman sometimes made promises which he did not carry out. With regard to sheep-worrying, for instance, in February of last year the President stated he was going to deal with the question; in March he was considering it; in May he hoped to deal with it before the session came to an end. And it was not dealt with yet. Then there was the question of breeding horses for the Army. On April 10th last year the right hon. Gentleman was most eager to afford farmers every opportunity of supplying the demands of the War Office; on the 17th of the same month he was in communication with the War Office on the subject; on May 27th he thought, although the kind of horses wanted for the Army was not the kind to pay a farmer to breed, still the first opportunity ought to be given to the farmers of the United Kingdom; two months after the President stated that a circular would shortly be issued giving every information, and in the following December, on being pressed to give the information promised, the right hon. Gentleman stated that 2,500 horses were required, of which 1,000 would come from Ireland and the remainder from the United Kingdom, but he thought this matter had lost a great deal of its interest for the British farmer. Why did this matter lose its interest? It suddenly lost its interest when they pressed the right hon. Gentleman to perform his promise. The farmers felt they had not been treated fairly in the matter; they had had a definite promise that a circular should be issued, which it was true might not have altered the horse-breeding arrangements of this country, but which might have enabled many a man who had a horse suitable for the Army to save his horse and get a better price for it. The horse breeders of this country should have such help given to them as was given by Continental Governments to their subjects, and they certainly felt that the Board of Agriculture should do something in order to insure that there should be some inspection of stallions; and the farmers felt that some help should be given to them in order that they might get their entire horses cheaper. In reference to preferential rates on railways the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the farmers had a grievance, and in Committee of Supply, last year, promised to use his influence with the Board of Trade in the matter. How far had the influence of the right hon. Gentleman furthered the question? The Department existed for the help of the farmers; but it had not helped them to obtain justice from the railway companies. The question was so large that it was hopeless to attempt to deal with it unless the Board of Agriculture took the matter up and obtained an inquiry: the efforts of individual farmers or associations were almost useless. He desired to ask also whether the President would take steps to trace the source of the new disease "phoma," which had arisen in connection with turnips in Lincolnshire, and place the result of his researches at the service of farmers, so that they could fight the disease. He hoped also that he would use his influence with the Local Government Board so that more houses might be provided in rural districts and the population be kept upon the land. In order to secure a reply he begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the salary of the President of the Board of Agriculture."—(*Mr. Mansfield.*)

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was now in a position to state the general outlines of the scheme he had frequently referred to for bringing the farmers in various parts of the country into closer contact with the Board of Agriculture. The proposal was a very important one and, if carried out in a practical way, might do much good. He further asked when it was proposed to revoke the muzzling order in Carmarthenshire. The order had been revoked in the larger portion of the county, but it was still in force in certain petty sessional divisions, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would say the time was near at hand when the order would be entirely removed. He entirely agreed with the remarks which had been made as to the injury suffered by farmers from unsound horses travelling the country. The injury arose from the fact that so many farmers had no way of finding out whether or not the horses were unsound, and if the right hon. Gentleman would do something in the direction which had been suggested he would confer on the farmers a substantial benefit.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the satisfactory results of the administration of the Board in stamping out foot-and-mouth disease and causing a diminution in swine fever. He wished to congratulate him still more on the suggestive and useful speeches which he had addressed to large bodies of agriculturists all over the country. The advantage to agriculturists of those meetings could hardly be exaggerated. Those speeches seemed to point to a new era of usefulness on the part of the Board of Agriculture, and to indicate lines of work which that Department had not hitherto attempted. No doubt, in the hints he had thrown out, the right hon. Gentleman had had in view the remarkable success of the work done by the organisation of societies stimulated and encouraged by the State which in twenty or thirty years had made Denmark one of the most successful agricultural countries in the world. Many agriculturists were stubbornly opposed to those ideas of co-operation which had effected such wonders in Ireland, and which, if the right hon. Gentleman had his way, would probably work similar results in England. But what he did hope was that the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that he was prepared to throw the ideas he had sketched out into a practical form and to lay before the Treasury a scheme for the wider application of the administrative powers of the Board in the direction of stimulating and organising the different branches of agriculture. With regard to the depopulation of the rural districts, the whole of that question really depended on making agriculture profitable in the rural districts to the smaller agriculturists. That was the real key of the position. People in this country only needed to go to Denmark to see how that had been done largely by State administration stimulating the action of agricultural societies. In this country they had great agricultural societies doing splendid work in certain directions, but not in the special direction in which such wonderful work had been done in Denmark. The record laid before the recent French Exhibition by the Danish section, in which it was indicated how the Danes had obtained control of the egg market in England, showed that 200,000,000 or 300,000,000 eggs were now being sent to this country, and this was largely due to the thorough organisation of the egg industry by the societies so as to guarantee quality and uniformity. The members of these societies were fined if they did not accurately date every egg before they were collected and sorted. These were the ways in which agriculture had been made a success and a lucrative occupation in Denmark. It was the same in regard to butter and poultry and other products. If in this country things were carried out as in Denmark, he ventured to say that they would not find the failure of the smaller agriculturists dwelt upon so often. He did not wish to go into this question further than to assure the right hon. Gentleman that there were

Members on the Opposition as well as the Government Benches who would support the general ideas he had been laying before the country in his speeches, and they welcomed most heartily the efforts he was making to bring about a profitable reorganisation of the different branches of agriculture in this country—a reorganisation which had been so successfully carried out by Mr. Horace Plunkett in Ireland, and which had been such a conspicuous success in Denmark.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.) said that most agricultural Members would agree with his hon. friend who had just sat down in his generous appreciation of the zeal and energy shown by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture since he took office. They only regretted that the resources of his Department were inadequate to fulfil all his aspirations. But no doubt a great deal might be done even by small resources, and the scheme the right hon. Gentleman had foreshadowed for bringing into closer contact the large organised bodies of farmers in different parts of the country might be productive of great good. They must not, however, expect too much from the Government Department connected with agriculture, because he did not think it was possible to organise the agricultural interests of this country like it was done in comparatively small countries such as Denmark and Ireland. He hoped the agriculturist would put self-help first, and State-help second. There was, however, a great deal which an Agricultural Department could do, and he wished to say a few words upon one branch which he knew his right hon. friend was desirous of improving, namely, agricultural education. They all knew what a small sum of money was devoted to that object by this country as compared with the amount provided by the Governments of other countries. No doubt his right hon. friend's answer would be much the same as that given by his predecessors in office, namely, that there were very large sums at the disposal of the local authorities which could, if necessary, be devoted to agricultural education. That was perfectly true, and no doubt the local bodies would do a great deal under the new system. Nevertheless, there were subjects under the head of experiment and research which could often be better dealt with by a central Government Department than by a large number of local bodies acting without any co-operation between themselves. He did not think his right hon. friend could do better than pursue the course he had taken up in regard to the cider-making industry, for by this means he brought the different authorities into co-operation, thus preventing them wasting their resources and efforts by overlapping each other in their experimental work. There was another direction in which he hoped his right hon. friend would also work, and that was co-operating with the Board of Education. Last year he got a Joint Committee appointed, which drew up an excellent syllabus of scientific agriculture. He hoped there would be a standing Joint Committee of the two Boards to consider all these educational topics. A great deal of this work ought to be directed by agricultural experts as well as educationists, and until the Board of Education contained an agricultural element practically acquainted with the needs of agriculture, he thought it was necessary for the Board of Agriculture to supply that deficiency, and help them to get a more practical and useful scheme of agricultural education.

MR. BRIGG emphasised the complaint which had been made on behalf of scientific men in the country that the scientific research carried on by the Agricultural Department was not sufficient for the needs of a country like England. He desired to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether it was the case that a large quantity of the plates, figures, and other information which he was now in the habit of giving to the farmers of this country were derived mainly from German and American sources, and not from English sources. If so, it was not befitting the dignity of this country. This country ought to be able to employ its own experts and make it worth their while, for they should not be entirely dependent upon outsiders for information which was so vital to the agricultural interests of this country.

*Dr. HUTCHINSON said the reason he rose to discuss this question was that he thought the time had now come when the farmers had had enough talking to, and it was time something should be really done for them. He thought the right hon. Gentleman opposite had quite decided and found out for himself that something must be done, and so he had started this advisory committee, which was going to put him in touch with the various agricultural societies in the different counties of the country. These advisory committees he was going to have formed from the various farmers' clubs and associations, and he was going to have the power of co-opting from them certain members. He thought that in order to get more into touch with the agriculturists they ought to go to the County Councils and ask them to form committees, which they might call Agricultural Committees, and they should have the power of co-opting members in the same way as the Education Committees did at the present time. In this way they would get a committee to watch over every county of this country, and they would deal with all the local questions which came up, and so a great deal of time would be saved, and a lot of good, practical work would be done. This question of co-operation should be gone into, for in certain counties co-operation would be very useful, whilst in others it would be impossible. In such matters as the buying of food stuffs, manure, and seeds, they might be obtained wholesale and sold at reduced prices to the farmer, They ought to publish a small gazette every week or every fortnight, so that the farmers would know what was going on. In this way the farmers would know where to buy or where to sell. An employer who wanted a man would then be able to get him through this gazette. This would be doing something practical, and would be of great service to the farmer, and give him a little bit of hope for the future. At the present time the tenant farmer was thinking of nothing but the Irish Land Bill, but they would not get a Land Bill in this country just yet, and something would have to be done for the English farmers before they were able to extend the Irish Land Bill to England. He took this opportunity of bringing his scheme before the right hon. Gentleman who had shown so much enthusiasm in the agriculture of this country.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said he wished to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman contemplated taking any step to carry out the proposals contained in the Report of the Departmental Committee which he appointed upon Afforestation. The second question he wished to ask related to the subject of restrictions in regard to swine fever. Those restrictions pressed somewhat hardly upon the farmer, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would do all in his power to make them as light as possible. In order to move pigs within the area to which the restriction applied, it was necessary to go to the superintendent of the district to get an order to do so. Farmers had complained to him that sometimes they had to go twelve miles to get an order to move swine a few hundred yards Would it not be possible to allow a farmer to make a declaration before the nearest magistrate, to send it by post to the superintendent, and to receive the order by post from him?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) said the discussion had ranged over a wide field not limited to his own Department; but he accepted the view that the influence of the Board of Agriculture ought so far as possible to be brought to bear on other Departments in matters which connected those Departments even indirectly with agricultural interests. The old practice of regarding different Departments as if they were so many foreign countries, and of conducting business with them by an enormous amount of correspondence, which wasted the time of the officials and caused expense to the Stationery Department, ought to cease; and he would endeavour as far as possible to promote by verbal communication harmonious working between Departments for the common cause. He would not omit the Treasury. He fully agreed with what had been said as to the somewhat starved condition of the Board of Agriculture. He could not shut his eyes to the fact that a great deal was being done in other countries on behalf of agriculturists who were keen competitors with agriculturists here, to whom no similar service could be rendered by the Board of Agriculture in this country. He did not limit himself to foreign or colonial countries, but might refer to Ireland itself. The British agriculturist had the same claim upon the State to assist the prosperity of his particular industry as had the Irish farmer. He would constantly, as occasion arose, press strongly upon the Treasury the necessity of seeing that the Board of Agriculture in Great Britain was put upon such a financial footing as to enable it to do more justice to the British farmers, who were competing with men in foreign countries and in the colonies whose Boards of Agriculture rendered them a vast amount of assistance.

He would deal with the questions which had been addressed to him seriatim. He thanked the hon. Member for North Manchester for what he said with regard to his action in opening the ports to Argentine cattle. The long delay in opening the ports to Argentine cattle had been justified by the result. He was quite sure that it was in the interests of the consumer as much as those of the farmer, considering what a large proportion of the food supply of this country was home grown. He thought it was something like 60 per cent. He was glad to say that the Argentine Government had now adopted our own regulations, and a great trade would be put on a steady, permanent basis. The trade between the Argentine and this country was going to be, perhaps, the most lasting trade in live cattle. Owing to the profitable use that could be made of the offal in Chicago, it paid the Americans better to send dead meat than to send live stock to this country. But the live cattle trade with the Argentine would always be a large one. In view of the length of the voyage—about sixty days—he was bound to take every precaution to see that this trade was carried on under humane conditions. He was afraid that in a good many tramp ships the trade was not carried on in as humane a manner as it ought to be, and his full statutory powers would be exercised religiously and firmly with a view to ensuring that the animals experienced no undue suffering during their long voyage.

With regard to the Irish cattle trade, he must say that what the hon. Member had mentioned was somewhat new to him. He should rather think that the hon. Member had exaggerated the case, but if he would supply details as to special ships or cargoes he would take care that full inquiry was made. As to agricultural education, although funds were limited, he recognised that as new agricultural colleges arose it would be the interest of the Department to see that they should be more or less assisted out of the public funds. These colleges were doing a great work. There was an additional advantage in being able to make grants to these colleges, in so far as they were connected with County Councils, because opportunity was given for striking bargains with the County Councils as to their use of their local taxation money for the purposes of agricultural education. Without co-operation between the Board of Agriculture and the County Councils the latter had a tendency to repeat experiments already tried, and money was sometimes wasted. But the County Councils had shown great willingness to co-operate with the Board of Agriculture, with the result that information as to what was being done elsewhere was available, co-ordination was promoted, and the local taxation money was put to its most advantageous use. With regard to elementary education in the village schools, he was entirely in accord with what the hon. Member for Devonshire had said, though there again his hands were somewhat tied. The Joint Committee of the Boards of Agriculture and of Education ought to be made permanent. He was quite sure that a good deal might then be done to put agricultural education in the elementary schools on a much more sound basis than hitherto. The County Councils would now have a great opportunity, because they could create a new Code and adapt education to local requirements. But the Code, under the hands of his right hon. friend the late Vice-President of the Council, was by no means so inelastic as many were inclined to suppose. A great deal had been done under it by certain managers. It was quite possible to give, as nature study, in the elementary schools a great deal of the teaching desired by the hon. Member. Where such teaching was wanting it was the fault not so much of the Code as of the managers themselves, who were either not sufficiently aware of the elastic nature of the new Code, or did not take sufficient interest in the subject. He should lose no opportunity to point out to the County Councils that the Code as it stood afforded facilities for giving the children in rural schools a more practical training—a training more suitable to their circumstances—than they had received in the past, and for differentiating the teaching in the village schools from that in the town schools. The two things were quite different, and he hoped under the new Act and the new powers given to the County Councils they would find a great improvement in rural education in the future.

In regard to railway rates he was on more dangerous ground. He had already, perhaps, stretched the powers of his Department in regard to this question as far as it was right and reasonable. He was quite ready to admit that the Board of Trade had more to do with railway rates than the Board of Agriculture; but at the same time he was the adviser and friend of the farmers, and he was anxious to assist them and prevent undue railway charges being levied upon them. An hon. Member had stated that the staff of the Department of the Minister of Agriculture should be fully competent to deal with this question of railway rates. Such a staff had already been formed consisting of very able men whose time was largely given to this subject; and he appealed to County Councils, and individual farmers not to hesitate in bringing forward any cases of undue railway charges to the notice of the Board of Agriculture. If that were done the matter would at once be inquired into. It had already been done in some parts of the country, in Scotland and Yorkshire, and he only wished that other parts of the country would do the same. It was only on facts that he could take action, but if nobody complained to him he could not take action. Certain alleged grievances had been mentioned to the Committee by an hon. Member, but if that Gentleman would bring these definitely before the Board of Agriculture they would be inquired into. If anybody complained that he was slow in moving, he could only reply that he was not furnished by the farmers with the necessary information. If he found any case in which a railway was overcharging farmers for the carriage of agricultural produce, it would be his duty to see that that was put a stop to, and also that restitution was made by the railway companies for overcharges in the past. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member who spoke of the great importance of encouraging our home markets. He did not think the residents in towns sufficiently recognised that while no doubt it was a good thing to have large foreign colonial markets, it was, after all, to the support of the home markets that the dwindling rural population looked for their maintenance.

He was glad to say that the Board of Agriculture had been reasonably successful in their fight against disease. The foot-and-mouth disease had been stamped out, and there had been a considerable diminution in swine fever. A right hon. Member had asked him if he could tell how long it would be before that disease was stamped out altogether. That was a question extremely difficult for him to answer, but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he should continue to use vigorously all the powers of the Department in stamping it out. He was bound to say that he congratulated himself on the willingness and readiness with which the farmers throughout the country had, at great inconvenience to themselves, borne the restrictions and regulations, which were of benefit to themselves in the end, and a great safeguard to the rest of the country. He was in communication with the Board of Agriculture in Ireland as to one difficulty which had arisen in regard to swine fever. It was very often the case that when swine fever had been stamped out in the west coast of England, it was re-introduced by animals imported from Ireland. It was not fair to English farmers that that should be the case, and he was in communication with the Board of Agriculture in Ireland to see whether the regulations could not be made as stringent in Ireland as in this country. He was sure that he would be supported in taking every step that was possible in the battle he was waging against swine fever and the importation of disease either from Ireland or any other country. He had been asked what opportunities there were for the exportation of stock to South Africa. At the present moment the Department had a Commissioner in South Africa inquiring what opportunities there might be for trade between this country and South Africa in stock. He was afraid, however, that for some time to come the great work of re stocking the farms in South Africa would be with much inferior cattle than we could send out from this to that country; but when that process was at an end the time would come for the use of an improved breed of stock, and he should then give to British farmers the fullest information of the opportunities which existed for the exportation of pedigree stock to South Africa. His hon. friend the Member for Devonshire had raised a comparatively new question, viz., the uniformity of weights and measures throughout the country. He agreed with the hon. Member as to the necessity of some change. In these days when farmers did not trust so much to mere local markets, but to markets very often at a very great distance, the necessity for a more uniform system of weights and measures was constantly felt. Local weights and measures might have had their advantage in the old days, but now that trade had vastly extended farmers were heavily handicapped by the great variety of weights and measures. Unfortunately this was one of the matters on which he did not think the Government ought to go too far ahead of public opinion. Farmers would require to be educated on the subject. He recollected that a Bill dealing with the subject was introduced six or seven years ago, but so strong was the feeling amongst farmers throughout the country against any enforced uniformity of weights and measures, that the Bill was defeated by a very large majority. He was sure that hon. Members who had influence with farmers would do a good work in putting the agricultural industry throughout the country on a sound footing if they used that influence to induce farmers to realise the importance and the benefit to themselves of abolishing the interminable system of local weights and measures.

Mr. Hanbury.

The hon. Member had also raised the question of the analysis of feeding stuffs, and questioned whether the Act had been carried out as fully as those who introduced it thought would be the case. That was due to the fact that small farmers did not care to pay the fees for the analysis of their small purchases. Moreover, these small farmers were more or less under the influence of the merchants, who naturally did not like their names to be brought forward in connection with Acts of Parliament, or to disclose the names of manufacturers. He had put himself in communication with several County Councils, Devonshire amongst the others, on the subject, and it had been arranged that in future they would act through the chief constable and inspectors of police, who would take the samples, so that the small farmers would have nothing to pay for the analysis, and no name would be disclosed. By that means the Act would be a great deal more efficiently worked. With respect to unsound stallions he was not at all sure that it would be necessary to have legislation to increase the powers of the Department on this subject. He doubted even whether public opinion would support such legislation. Many farmers did not know whether the horses were sound or not; very often they were inclined to take the cheapest and nearest. He thought that the Board of Agriculture could, without legislation, carry out a scheme by which guarantees would be issued that such and such stallions were sound. The hon. Member said that he had given a promise to introduce a Bill on the subject of sheep worrying. He had given a pledge to farmers in Scotland to introduce such legislation; but on reconsideration he had come to the conclusion that instead of confining the measure to Scotland, it should deal with the whole of Great Britain. He had now such a Bill ready, and he hoped to be able to introduce it in the course of the next two or three days. As to the question of remounts, the hon. Gentleman seemed to think that his interest in the matter had somewhat abated. That was not the case by any means, because he felt as strongly as ever that by far the greater proportion of horses that might be bought for the Army ought to be bought from farmers in our own country. They ought to have the first chance in this matter. But he confessed that the only abatement in his interest in the matter had been on account of the small number of horses which he found the War Office required. Having regard to the large number of our cavalry, he did suppose that the number of horses required by the War office would be considerably greater than it was; but it was only about 1,500 a year, and that was not a great matter to the farmers one way or the other. However, he perfectly agreed with the hon. Gentleman that even if the number were only 1,500, the farmers ought to have every information on the subject. A leaflet was now being prepared, giving the latest information which he had received from the War Office, and that leaflet would be issued without delay. At the same time, he wanted to show that the farmers should not place too great expectations on the matter; and he wished to bring out clearly the fact that the number of horses required was limited to 1,500.

Then, with reference to the new disease which had broken out in Lincolnshire, the hon. Gentleman asked him if it had been brought to the notice of the technical experts in his Department. No doubt it had; but it had not been brought personally before him. He would, however, see that the matter was inquired into, because it was undoubtedly the duty of his Department, when a disease of that kind broke out, to take every step to find out what its history was, and what were the best means of coping with it. If inspectors had not been sent down to deal with the matter already, he could promise the hon. Gentleman that that course would be taken at once, and that no time would be lost in trying to find a remedy for what the hon. Gentleman represented to be a very serious disease. Then, as to the question of afforestation, he was asked how far he was prepared to carry out the recommendations of the Departmental Committee which he appointed a year or eighteen months ago. As the hon. Gentleman was aware, the report only of that Committee had yet been published. He had not yet received the evidence, and therefore it would be premature for him to express an opinion upon the matter. But he was glad to say that *primâ facie*, so far as he had read the report, and so far as he could form an opinion without the evidence, there were, at any rate, certain recommendations which he thought he could say off-hand would be given effect to. The Commissioners of Woods and Forests were perfectly willing to set apart a certain district in the Forest of Dean for an experimental demonstration area as was suggested by the Committee; and he had no doubt that when he read the evidence there would be other portions of the report to which also he should be able to give effect, because he felt that the question of afforestation was one of serious interest to this country. When he saw the price of timber going up all over the world, and when he saw, in these days of depressed agriculture, large districts which would pay better under timber than under any other form of agriculture, he thought afforestation was a matter of very great importance, not only in Great Britain but, if he might say so, also in Ireland. He should do his utmost to impress on the Treasury the necessity of carrying out, as far as they might be supported by the evidence, the recommendations of the Departmental Committee, which he believed had rendered a great public service, and they were all very much indebted to the hon. Gentleman who presided over it.

With regard to the muzzling order in Carmarthenshire, he hoped that when six months had elapsed from the last proved case of rabies, he would be able to modify, or perhaps withdraw, the regulations altogether. But the hon. Gentleman should recollect that while rabies had been stamped out altogether in other parts of the United Kingdom, it had, for some mysterious reason, lingered in Carmarthenshire longer than anywhere else. During the last twelve months there had been undoubted cases of rabies in that part of the country. He thought it was well, when they had stamped out the disease everywhere else, and when they had limited it to a small area, that they should not be in too great a hurry to remove the restrictions, seeing that it was the last part where rabies lingered in the whole country. They wanted to make the regulations effective, but, at the same time, they wanted them to work with as little friction as possible, and he was sure the hon. Gentleman would do him the justice of saying that that had always been the aim of the Department. As regarded the information supplied to farmers, a great deal of it was no doubt obtained from foreign countries, but they had also obtained a great deal of information from British sources. He was sure the hon. Gentleman would not wish the Department to depend solely on British sources of information, and he himself felt that they ought to pick the brains of their neighbours as well as the brains of their own countrymen. One of the things he had brought about at the Board of Agriculture was that they should constantly and steadily study more than before, all the sources of information supplied by foreign countries. The information issued by Canada and the United States was of an extremely important character, and highly organised departments of agriculture in other countries published information which it would be folly for them to neglect. The Intelligence Department of the Board of Agriculture were now using every means to keep fully abreast of the information supplied by foreign countries, and to circulate it as far as possible among the farmers. He felt strongly that there was no use in merely getting the information if it was not circulated among those whom it most concerned. In many cases the farmers who really most needed information were the small and isolated men; and he felt that no stone ought to be left unturned to bring before them every kind of information which would be of advantage to them in their industry. There was great difficulty often in bringing information of this kind directly under their notice; but he was now establishing a system of distribution of leaflets, especially among the smaller and more isolated men, which it was believed would be of advantage to them as well as to the farmers of the country generally.

MR. MANSFIELD said that in view of the sympathetic and comprehensive reply of the right hon. Gentleman, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,333, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for stationery, printing, paper, binding, and printed books for the public service; to pay the salaries and expenses of the Stationery Office; and for sundry miscellaneous services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he wished to call attention to the manner in which the Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons had been carried out in connection with contracts given out by the Stationery Department. The debates on the subject had established the fact that the rate of wages to be paid should be the rate of wages obtaining in the particular district concerned. If the contract were given in London, then the rate of wages should be the rate current in London. the case to which he wished to draw attention was that of Messrs. Wyman, who, having works outside London, at Reading, could work there at a lower rate of wages than that which was paid in London, and were thus enabled to compete unfairly with firms who were London firms in the proper sense of the word, and who had no works outside. He did not know whether it was in the recollection of the Committee, but this was a matter which was fully gone into last year, and the then Secretary to the Treasury promised that the matter should be investigated, and that if the complaint was well founded, justice should be done. He had brought forward the matter again, because he had been assured that the great evil of which complaint had been made had not been redressed, and therefore, without further remark, he would move to reduce the Vote by £100. He earnestly hoped the reply from the Secretary to the Treasury would not make it necessary to proceed to a division, but if an assurance could not be given that this evil would be redressed, he should have to carry the matter to a Division.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,233, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

MR. BELL said he desired to support the hon. Member opposite on this matter, on the ground that these people, by removing the work to Reading where labour was cheaper, had been able to compete with London houses who had no works outside. He thought that all London contracts ought to be done by firms having their works in London. He understood that there was another reason why the work had been transferred to Reading, and that was that Messrs. Wyman could not only do the work at a lower rate of wage than the London rate, but that they had been able, as he had been informed, to introduce a large number of women to do the work which he considered should be done by men. He trusted some satisfactory reply would be given by the hon. Gentleman in charge of this Vote to the points now raised.

MR. BRIGG called attention to the manner in which the Bills and Estimates presented to the House were stitched and the inferior string which was used for this purpose. He had previously complained of the fact that the moment one took one of these papers into their hands they fell to pieces, and the result had been that a better class of string had been used, but the old string seemed again to have taken the place of the superior quality. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would give this small matter his attention.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham) said he asked the indulgence of the Committee, as he had not had time to become fully acquainted with these Estimates With reference to the last point with regard to the binding of the Bills and Estimates, he would certainly inquire into the reason why the better string used a year or two ago had been discarded for an inferior twine, and would do his best to bring back the better string. As to the remarks of his hon. friend the Member for Shoreditch, he must point out that the Government had no undue preference as to whether the work of the printer was carried out in London or in the country. It was not their business to favour contractors or workmen in any part of the kingdom; and he thought that it would be to lay down a most dangerous doctrine that the Government should inquire and give out tenders on condition that the work should be done where wages were most high. It would be a most unreasonable thing to give preference to the interests of London over the interests of the country at large. His hon. friend had called attention to the Fair Wages Resolution. There was no doubt that every Government contractor was bound to see that fair wages were given. In this case the contractors got the work done in the country, at Reading, and why should they not? He could not agree to the suggestion that the contractors should not get their work done outside of London, and he did not think that a case had been made out. He was perfectly willing to give the same assurance which was given last year by his predecessor—that if there was a case made out of a breach of the Resolution passed by the House, then the Government would be ready, willing, and anxious to inquire into it and put an end to any misconduct of the contractor.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

[By Order.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he rose with some reluctance to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill. At the same time he would at once say that he did not do so in hostility to the Bill itself or to the Company, but because he felt that this was the only opportunity he would have of raising a question of great interest not only to his constituents but to the agricultural industry throughout the length and breadth of the land: the question of railway rates. He also raised this question on the Second Reading of this Bill because the President of the Board of Agriculture, in a speech to the farmers at a meeting at Leicester on the 12th January last, said—

> "If the companies did not treat them fairly, when the companies came before Parliament every year for fresh powers agriculturists should make their grievances known by their representatives in Parliament."

That was a direct invitation to Members who represented agricultural constituencies to take the course he now took, otherwise the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would have a perfect right to say the farmers were not willing to help themselves because those whom they sent to represent them there would not take the opportunity of raising questions of this sort which deeply affected those whom they represented. On the other hand he admitted it was a matter of great difficulty to attack. He was not now attacking the Great Western Railway, because everyone knew the Railway Association governed this matter. He was attacking the whole railway system. The President of the Board of Agriculture in the same speech said, upon this point—

> "There was no doubt much injustice, but it was difficult to do much in the matter because railway companies had so much influence in the House of Commons."

That being so, he opposed this Bill, not so much in the hope of getting the alteration he had asked for as regards the carriage of milk in particular, but rather to make use of this opportunity of raising that question and also of rates for agricultural produce generally. Up to last year the Company, though carrying milk at owner's risk at half the rates allowed by the Act of 1891 at Company's risk under very strict regulations, did not enforce them, and gave compensation for milk lost in transit—generally one half of its value. The Act of 1891 which applied generally to all railway companies, sanctioned a charge of what in these days are practically prohibitive rates, and the consequence has been that the railway companies introduced new rates called "owner's risk" rates, the conditions of which were—

> "The Company will not undertake either the collection or delivery of milk.
>
> "The Senders and Consignees must assist in the loading and unloading of the cans when the milk is carried at the Reduced Rate.
>
> "Two Rates are in operation for the carriage of milk:—One the Ordinary Rate charged when the Company accept the ordinary liability of a Railway Company with respect to the carriage of perishable merchandise by passenger train; the other a Reduced Rate adopted when the Sender agrees to relieve the Company and all other Companies or persons over whose lines the traffic may pass, or in whose possession the same may be during any portion of the transit, from all liability for loss, damage, misdelivery, delay or detention, either with respect to the milk or the milk cans when full or empty, except upon proof that such loss, damage, misdelivery, delay, or detention arose from wilful misconduct on the part of the Company's servants."

Now it was utterly impossible for the farmer to prove that any loss that occurred was owing to the wilful misconduct of the company's servants. How could a farmer living in Somerset prove any fault on the part of the company's servants at Bristol, Swindon, or London? The effect of these regulations had been to put the farmer entirely into the hands of the railway companies, and the reason no effort had been made to attack the companies was that these restrictions had not been put in force until recently, although the companies had always had power to enforce them. It had been contended by some companies that they had been in the habit of paying compensation for the loss of churns; that was to say, where a churn, whether empty or full, had entirely disappeared whilst in the company's possession, the company had paid compensation not only for the milk but the churn as well; but this the farmers denied, and some had told him that although they had lost a considerable number of churns they had had no compensation. Another question that arose with regard to this milk rate was that the railway company said they carried this milk at great inconvenience to themselves, and in fact that they had lost money on its carriage in large quantities at owners' risk; and another thing was, that it was carried in a way which prohibited it being sent in small quantities, because there is a minimum quantity of twelve gallons. If a farmer wished to send a small quantity to a private family, say four gallons, the company charged him 3d. a gallon. Four gallons sent 100 miles would cost 3d. a gallon instead of 1d. per gallon. In bringing forward this matter he was supported by the North East Somerset Farmers' Club, the Somerset and Gloucestershire Dairy Farmers' Association, and Somerset Chamber of Agriculture, who have all proposed resolutions condemning this new practice of the company. It was on behalf of these bodies and of the milk sellers of Somerset that I approached the Great Western Railway with the following three proposals:—1. The Great Western Railway Company to revert to their former practice of considering claims for milk lost in transit, and not to refuse compensation. 2. The company to pay full compensation for milk churns lost or damaged while under their control. 3. The company to compensate for loss incurred owing to milk churns being put out at the wrong station. The House would agree that these were not very onerous obligations to put upon the company, and seem only to be reasonable. In fact, they had accepted the first proposal but had qualified it to a great extent. As to proposal 2 they accepted half of it only, and as regards proposal 3 they refused to accept it altogether; and he had no doubt they were acting for the Railway Association in this matter. They had said that—

> "While maintaining the provisions of the owner's risk consignment notes when milk is so conveyed, the Great Western Railway will not refuse to consider claims for milk lost in transit, under exceptional circumstances. The Great Western Railway will not consider the provisions of the owner's risk consignment note as disentitling traders to compensation where churns of milk are lost while under control of the Company.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is taking a very unusual course in discussing the details of risks on contracts of this sort on the Second Reading of an omnibus Bill.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: Then I will leave that part of the question and go on at once to refer to what has been said by the Great Western Railway. The hon. Gentleman continuing said the company contended that, having regard to the fact that the average retail price of milk was 1s. 4d. per gallon, the price they charged for carriage was not excessive, and that the farmers ought to be able to obtain a profitable payment for the milk they supplied. Could any statement be more misleading? While it might be true that the retailer got that in the West End of London, it was perfectly well known that the farmers had to be content with from 5d. to 7d. per gallon, and the margin of profit was so small that he felt any increase in the rate or any change in the conditions under which milk was carried by railway companies. It was a matter of great difference to him whether he paid a farthing or a halfpenny a gallon for milk sent to the Metropolis. Again, what encouragement did the railway companies offer to farmers to supply the consumers direct, to the advantage of both, and so do away with the middle-man. None at all, for the Great Western rates for small quantities of milk were prohibitive at owner's risk, minimum of twelve gallons, *e.g.*, five gallons over 100 miles at 1s. 0¾d. equal to 3d. a gallon. To this must be added 1s. for delivery, or equal to over 5d a gallon, or nearly equal to the cost of the milk itself. Great Eastern rates equivalent were 1d. per gallon and worked out at 4¾d. a gallon for carriage, while value of milk was only 5d. to 7d. a gallon.

But it was not only for milk that the Great Western Railway rates were so high. Take their rates (owner's risk), with free delivery in usual limits, for farm and dairy produce not exceeding thirty miles, and compare them under the same conditions with other railways they found that the Great Western Railway for 4d. carried 4 lbs. for not exceeding thirty miles, while the Great Eastern Railway for 4d. carried 8 lbs., or double, for the same distance. The Great Western Railway carried for 5d. 6 lbs. for the same distance, the Great Eastern Railway carried 16 lbs. for 5d. Again, comparing three railways carrying these same goods for thirty miles with the Great Western Railway, the Great Eastern Railway carried 72 lbs. for 6d., the London and North Western Railway carried 48 lbs. for 6d., and the Great Northern Railway carried 48 lbs. for 6d. The Great Western Railway carried 24 lbs. for 6d. He would give two more examples. The Great Western Railway rate for 32 lbs. was 7d., while the Great Eastern Railway carried 88 lbs. for that amount, and carried one cwt. for 9d., while the Great Western Railway's rate for one cwt. was 1s. 5d., and the London and Brighton, Great Central, London and North Western, and the Great Northern rate was 1s. 2d. per cwt. The Great Western Railway rate for feeding stuffs is arbitrary from Bristol to Clutton ten miles, the rate is 2s. 7d. for two ton lots of corn, and 3s. 4d. for two ton lots of cake, the same in either case whether in sacks or loose.

But this question of railway rates and owner's risk was not only an agricultural question, for he noticed that the Report of the Council of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce referred to it. The Report said:—

> "The action of railway companies in asking for a declaration freeing them from considerable liability, which as common carriers the traders consider legally belonged to the railway companies, has been the cause of meetings of Chambers of Commerce in various parts of the country, when the course adopted by the companies was strongly condemned, and it was urged that it was calculated if persisted in to inflict serious injury on local industries. It was also resolved to recommend the commercial community not to sign the general agreement for goods to be carried at reduced rates at owner's risk, pending results of negotiations with the companies."

Chambers of Commerce were highly organised bodies and could make their voice heard, but not so the scattered agricultural interest, and their only resource was this House. He might be told by the representative of the Board of Trade who deals with this matter that they could appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners on this question, but how could a farmer go to that expensive procedure. That had been recognised in the case of Ireland. Would that the English farmer had the protection afforded the Irish farmer by Section 17 of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, which provided that the Irish Board of Agriculture might appear as complainant on behalf of any persons aggrieved in reference to any matter which the Railway and Canal Commissioners had jurisdiction to hear and determine. For what use is it for the Government to tell the English farmer that he can appeal himself at his own cost to those Commissioners? They might not have the President of the Board of Trade on their side, but they knew they had the sympathy of the President of the Board of Agriculture, and it was upon these grounds, and because the farmers were unable to speak for themselves, that he begged to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DICKINSON (Somersetshire, Wells) said he was bound to say he was to a certain extent in agreement with the hon. Baronet, but on the other hand he lived in the district that the Great Western Railway traversed and was a constant passenger on that line, and must bear witness to the good accommodation they afforded to their passengers, and the courtesy shown by the officials. There was no doubt that in the rural districts they looked for some improvements in the rates now charged by the Great Western Railway, and as a representative of one of the greatest dairy districts, perhaps the largest in this country, he could not allow this Bill to pass without according some support to the hon. Baronet in the contention that he had laid before the House. As the hon. Baronet has said, because of the speech he made at Devizes and other places, some confidence has been placed in the President of the Board of Agriculture. Opposition was coming to the Great Western Railway, because a very important railway was now in course of promotion between London and Bristol, and while on the one hand so good was the passenger accommodation of the Great Western Railway that he could hardly imagine any system or new railway being able to compete with it, yet this new railway, if it was to live at all, could only be assumed to be able to live out of the goods traffic, and therefore one would naturally suppose there was some cause of complaint with regard to the treatment of agriculture in the rural districts. There was one other matter he should allude to on this occasion, and that was that Parliament always viewed with great jealousy any amalgamation of railway companies. There was in this Bill a clause, Clause 44, which alluded to the amalgamation with the Great Western Railway of the Ely Valley Railway, and he believed this particular clause was the exact case that was brought against the Great Western Railway, because by that clause the rates now charged by the Ely Valley Railway would be swept away, and the new rates of the Great Western Railway were to be substituted. That was a point which might possibly be explained by the fact that the Ely Valley Railway was a very small railway, and that there was no object, therefore, in unduly pressing the point; but it was a matter which was closely connected with the Bill in question, because they were anxious to obtain a reduction of rates and they were anxious that the Great Western Railway should bring that forward.

*MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said he could understand the position taken up by the hon. Baronet opposite, but not the position taken by his hon. friend. In reply to the remarks of the hon. Baronet, he might say he did not speak only as a director, but should like to appeal to the House as a trader, farmer, and milk-seller for a great number of years. The hon. Baronet opposite had carefully omitted one point from his remarks. He had spoken of the milk rates of the Great Western Railway and the system of introducing "owner's risk" rates for milk. He would remind him that prior to 1888 there was no obligation on the part of the railway companies to carry milk except as goods, and certainly no obligation to carry it by passenger train. Then came a time later on, when, by an order of the Board of Trade, following the Bill of 1888, arrangements were made with regard to the carriage of milk by passenger train. It then became necessary, so far as the Great Western Railway was concerned, that there should be not only the ordinary company's rate, but there should be also the rate known as "owner's risk rate." When these rates were first instituted in 1893, the rate for a district within 100 miles of London, where most of the milk consigned to Paddington came from, for twelve gallons was 1s. 7d. That was the company's risk. Now came the price under the owner's risk. As against 1s. 7d. company's risk the owner's risk was 1s. 4½d. In that same year, in consequence of representations made to the company, a further reduction was made in the owner's risk rate which was reduced to 1s. 3d. Again, in 1896 there was a further reduction in consequence of the statement that was made that the railway company were called upon to refund next to nothing on account of damage done, and the owner's risk rate is now 1s., the company's risk rate remaining as it always has 1s. 7d. Thus in three years a reduction of 25 per cent. has been made on the carriage of milk. In 1886 the course taken by the farmers and traders was different to that which had been taken by the hon. Baronet to-night. Then the farmers and traders of the West of England approached the directors of the Great Western Railway and met them in conference, with the result that, as he had said, the rate from Bristol and other places was reduced by 25 per cent. in three years. There was all the difference in the world between the owner's risk and the company's risk rate. The owner's risk rate was a lower rate because, when the owner took the risk, he signed every day an agreement mentioning the amount of milk in his churn, and he had to agree to certain conditions which were published and which, every morning and afternoon, either he or his agent had to sign before the milk could be sent away. The hon. Baronet opposite, as a milk seller, had signed those conditions for many years, and he had never objected.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Yes, I did, but I was forced to sign them because you would not take my milk else.

*MR. LLEWELLYN: The hon. Baronet signed those conditions again and again, and there was not the slightest doubt that he was satisfied with the agreement that was made. In 1882 the Great Western Railway carried 750,993 gallons, and in 1892, ten years after, they carried 1,089,156 gallons, which will show to some extent the amount of our milk-carrying trade in the West of England, and anybody who knows anything about it will appreciate the difficulty of carrying such a huge amount of milk without accidents occasionally happening. What really has happened is this, that when these rates were reduced from time to time the farmers unfortunately did not get the full benefit of the reductions the fact being that whenever the company reduced its rates the London dealers lowered their price to farmers, and farmers submitted without a word, and so really gained nothing by the railway concession. The whole profit going into the pockets of the dealers. With regard to the price of milk, the average price that a farmer obtained was in winter 8d. per gallon, and in summer 5d. per gallon. The ordinary charge in London was something like 1s. 4d. per gallon, or double as much as the farmer got in winter, and three times as much as he got in summer. The public did not complain, and now the House of Commons was asked to say that it was the railway company's fault that the farmers did not get the benefit of the charges. Until the farmers combined together and sent up their milk in the way that other produce was sent up, they would remain at this disadvantage. The fact of the matter was that his hon. friend wanted the advantage of the company's risk at the owner's risk rate. He admitted, on behalf of the railway company, that at times there had been irregularities. But in speaking of the damage to churns and so forth, it had to be remembered that the churns were not entirely in the hands of the railway company. The agreement was that they should be put on the trucks, and that assistance should be given by the farmer's men. When the milk was in transit it was undoubtedly in the charge of the company, but the company had nothing whatever to do with the delivery of it, and anyone who had been at any of the large termini in London in the early morning would have seen the reckless way in which these churns were knocked about. Damage must ensue, but it was not fair to the company to say that the damage was done entirely by their servants. He did not ignore the fact that certain cases of hardship had arisen. Some time ago it was the habit of the company's servants to give compensation carelessly, or to recommend cases for compensation for damage done when the cans had been sent at owner's risk. The attention of the servants was called to the fact by the chief officers, and possibly in some cases they went to the other extreme. The public had only to make their cases known to the chief officers, and they would receive fair attention. This Bill was not a Bill simply to create charges for milk or other rates; it was an omnibus Bill involving an expenditure of a million of money. The question of rates did not arise except indirectly. With regard to new works that were to be carried out, powers were being sought to put them with respect to milk rates in the same position as the rest of the system of the Great Western Railway. In that respect, and in that respect only, could the question of rates be brought into the discussion of the Bill. It was much against the wishes of the Great Western Railway Company Directors. and of the officers of the company, that difficulties should arise, and if hon. Gentlemen representing those engaged in the trade would only write direct to the chief officers, he could guarantee that they would not get simply an official answer, but that men would be sent immediately into the neighbourhood to see into any complaints. For these reasons he did not see that hon. Members would have any reason to complain if they allowed the Bill to pass. He therefore hoped that the ordinary course would be followed, and that the Second Reading would now be allowed to be taken, and the Bill sent upstairs for full inquiry.

Lord **EDMUND FITZMAURICE** (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said that anyone listening to the debate would naturally suppose that this was a Bill containing a new schedule of rates for the carriage of milk, whereas it was a Bill for conferring powers on the Great Western Railway Company in respect of their own undertakings and upon that company and certain other companies whose names were recited in respect of undertakings in which they were jointly interested, and upon the Fishguard and Rossland Railways and Harbours Company in respect of their undertaking, and for amalgamating the Ely Valley Railway Company with the Great Western Railway Company, and other purposes. There was an expenditure of about a million and a quarter of money involved in this Bill, and it would be a very serious disaster indeed to that part of England with which those Members who had spoken were connected if the Bill were not passed. He therefore thought his hon. friend had brought up this question more by way of a protest than with any serious intention of taking a division. But with regard to the specific point to which he had referred he had not heard there was any serious discontent; certainly nothing had yet reached him from those whom he represented. It might, of course, be said that although he was not a Great Western Director, he was tarred with the Great Western brush, because a part of his constituency comprised the large town of Swindon. But a large number of his constituents were agriculturists, and from the circumstance that his constituency was partly agricultural and partly urban he claimed to be able to look at this question in an impartial manner. He quite admitted and it had been admitted by the hon. Member who had just spoken, and by the Great Western Railway Company themselves, that from time to time there had been cases of hardship owing to misunderstandings with regard to this question of owner's risk. But while that was admitted, the Great Western Railway Company had gone three-fourths of the way, as he understood, towards meeting the views of his hon. friend. Every member of the House who had seen the unloading of these enormous numbers of milk-cans at Paddington Station must be perfectly aware that there was a great risk of loss and injury; that these cans got knocked and battered about by rough handling, and that naturally claims for compensation from time to time arose. But it had also to be borne in mind on the other hand, as the statistics which had been given of the gigantic increase of this traffic showed, that these rates had not had the effect of paralysing or checking the milk traffic in the West of England to any appreciable degree. On the contrary, if anything, agriculturists in the West of England were rather inclined to lament that the whole of the country was now being put down to grass, that the making of cheese and butter was being entirely abandoned, and that the farmer thought of absolutely nothing except producing milk, putting it into these cans, and sending it up to London. He would not discuss whether that was a wise or a foolish thing to do, but it showed that although there were undoubtedly cases, as the Great Western Railway Company themselves admitted, of occasional hardship, there could not be anything in these milk rates which could be said to paralyse or check that great industry which was increasing by leaps and bounds. That being so, he hoped the Bill would be allowed to go to Second Reading. If it was desired to raise any of the points to which reference had been made he submitted that the natural and proper course would be to take any legitimate opportunity there might be to thresh them out in the Committee upstairs.

Mr. **COURTENAY WARNER** (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the whole point that his hon. friend had raised was that the Great Western Railway was extending its system over which it had a monopoly, and that they would put their high rates on to the new railways that were being built, and also on to the railway which was to be amalgamated, and on which the present rates were lower than those of the Great Western Railway Company. It had been suggested that his hon. friend and others who had grievances should go direct to the directors and represent them. That was all very well for isolated cases, but it was to the general principle of high rates that they desired to draw attention.

The very people who could not go to the railway directors were the small farmers, and the small people, who were the great sufferers, and it was to those people that they wanted to extend the general principle of the reduction of rates for milk and agricultural produce throughout the country. He looked upon this as a national question, because what applied to this railway would apply to other railways, and the House, by allowing railways to extend their systems, and to apply their scales of rates and charges over agricultural districts, prevented new railways being the benefit they ought to be to the agricultural parts of the country. While he hoped his hon. friend would not go to a division, he looked forward in future days to seeing some curtailment of these powers instead of their extension.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY asked leave to withdraw the Amendment. He had no hostility at all to the Great Western Railway Bill as a Bill; he had simply taken this opportunity of raising a question which affected not only his constituents, but also the farmers at large in the West of England.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

MIDLAND AND BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAYS BILL.

Committed.

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

CLASS II.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £381,333, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904, for Stationery, Printing, Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for the Public Service; to pay the Salaries and Expenses of the Stationery Office; and for sundry Miscellaneous Services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

CAPT. SINCLAIR (Forfar) called attention to the change which had been made in the indexing of Hansard. The system of indexing which, during the last four or five years had given some satisfaction, had this year been changed. Possibly it was due to a desire to economise in the printing and publishing of the Debates, but he submitted that in the important matter of the record of its own proceedings, Parliament ought to be able to lay down some general rules by which some degree of continuity would be ensured. Heads of reference which had appeared in former years were now omitted, and new heads had been introduced. This would certainly cause difficulty and confusion in referring to the records of past years, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would give the matter his attention.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked whether there was not a motion for the reduction of the Vote before the Committee.

* THE CHAIRMAN said that with the adjournment all motions for reduction dropped, and the subject was started afresh at the evening sitting.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said that in that case he would repeat the Motion he made at the morning sitting, viz., to reduce the Vote by £100. If it was alleged that the contract of which he complained was open to the whole country, and that therefore the scale of wages which obtained in London did not apply, why had that scale of wages been applied to this contract, and a preference given to a firm which was not a London firm in the true sense of the term, but one which had works in the country and was consequently able to compete unfairly with London firms whose works were in London? He wished to know if this contract was thrown open to all the printers of the country, and, if so, he should like to know the names of a few of the non-

London firms who competed. There must be something very strange indeed about this contract in view of the fact that the wages in London at the time the contract was made were 38s. per week, as against 28s. per week in Reading. It was very singular that country firms were not able to tender upon a basis which would have enabled them to compete favourably. The real crux of the question was that, while other firms based their tenders upon the London scale of wages, this firm was allowed to base its tender upon the Reading scale of wages, and therefore a very unfair advantage was obtained over other printers who had not two sets of works, one in London and the other in Reading. He hoped his hon. friend would not repeat the assurance given to them last year, but would make some definite statement as to the intention of the Government. They had always understood that the whole arrangement was framed upon general principles, and surely some very distinct and special scheme might be adopted under which no contractor having the advantages which he had indicated would be able to drive a coach and four, not only through the intentions of the officers whose business it was to conduct negotiations, but also through what had been a very serious principle established by a vote of the House. He hoped the Government would be able to make such arrangements as would prevent any particular contractor defeating the great principle which Parliament had laid down. He begged to move a reduction of this Vote by £100.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,233, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham) said that with reference to the question raised by his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Forfar, the change which had been made in the indexing of *Hansard* was done with a desire to economise, and to get the work done better than it had been done before, and done by more competent hands. In the particular case to which the hon. and gallant Member had referred, he believed that a change had been made for the better, and, as time went on, he thought it would be found that the House would gain considerably by the change. To this cause was no doubt due the modification and the alteration in the system of indexing. It was, however, most important that the indexing should be carried out on the same general lines as before. With reference to the remarks which fell from the hon. Member for Shoreditch, he had little to add to what he said upon this question of the Fair Wages Resolution before the adjournment. His hon. friend stated that there had been some breach of the Fair Wages Resolution passed by the House in 1901, but his hon. friend had not brought forward any specific cases to show that either the Government or the contractors have been unwilling to carry out the Resolution. His hon. friend seemed to think that, in some way or another, this contract had been limited to firms in London, but that was not so, and it would be a most undesirable and improper course to take if they insisted upon any such condition.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked if the hon. Gentleman could give the name of any firm outside London who tendered for this contract.

MR. ELLIOT said he did not think it was desirable to give the names of those firms who were unsuccessful, and he did not see what would be gained by giving such information. His hon. friend contended that there had been a breach of the Resolution passed by the House, and he would ask him to define clearly what that breach was. In the absence of any evidence that this rule had been broken he had a right to hold that it was unbroken. He could only repeat the assurance given by his predecessors that if any specific cases where there had been any breach of the Fair Wages Resolution by the contractor were brought forward, the Government were willing to investigate them and set matters right.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that the contract for the Debates had been made on the basis of a rate of wages of 38s. per week, whereas the present contract was actually being carried out in a district where the wages were 28s. per week. Therefore the Government paid the full amount and the contractor got the difference of 10s. per week in the rate of wages.

MR. ELLIOT said he did not agree with the hon. Member's statement that the contract was made upon one basis and carried out upon another. The present contractors had a place of business in London, and it was almost an absurd suggestion to say that the contract must be carried out in that particular place where the contract was made. He did not wish in any way to disregard the Fair Wages Resolution which the House had adopted, but he claimed that the Government had a right to ask for specific cases where a breach had taken place to be brought before them, and if this course were adopted, the Government would do their best to set matters right.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) referred to the indexing of *Hansard* and the efficiency of reporting the debates. There was only one word which described the principle upon which *Hansard* was indexed; it was "exasperating," due to a principle of economy which was always interfering with the efficiency of this public service. His hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury said that arrangements had been made for getting the indexing and reporting done in a more efficient manner, and he also said in a more economical way. The energies of the House should be directed to making the service connected with *Hansard* good rather than cheap, and a model to all other publications of public utility. It was too soon to speak of the new system of indexing, but unless it was a departure from the old system it would be of no use. If the same cheese-paring want of cross references was allowed to interfere with its efficiency the thing would be no better in the future than in the past.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 55; Noes, 109. (Division List, No. 63 .)

AYES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, Geo. M. (*Edinburgh*)
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fuller, J. M. F.
Grant, Corrie
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, William (*Carnarvonshire*
Kearley, Hudson E
Kitson, Sir James
Levy, Maurice
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr Bell.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brymer, William Ernest
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Mr. Claude Hay.

Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Stafford. N. W.*
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Johnstone, Heywood
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lt.-Col. Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tomlinson, Sir. Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wilson, A. S. (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he wished to draw attention to the magnitude of this Vote. Although there was a net decrease of £68,000 they had by no means got back to the before the war expenditure. On referring to the figures for the year 1899-1900 he found that, in spite of this small reduction, the Vote still remained £100,000 above the expenditure of that year. He thought that the Stationery Department was one of the most extravagant of all the Departments whose Estimates were laid before the Committee. At any rate, it was one of those Departments where there was the greatest room for saving, and he hoped the new Secretary to the Treasury would take the opportunity of employing his energies in trying to reduce the heavy expenditure they were now asked to pass. Before the war the Vote used to run about £570,000; this year it was £701,000. He intended to move the reduction of the Vote, but before doing so he should like to say a word or two as to the quality of the reporting of *Hansard*. It must be in the knowledge of many Members that almost every newspaper in the country had a much higher quality of reporting than the House got under the *Hansard* contract. He supposed it was because the contractor did not pay sufficiently high salaries to command the quality of men who could do the condensation necessary to bring the speeches within the required length. It was one thing to report a speaker *verbatim*; it was a very different thing, and required a superior man, to be able to condense a speech into one-third of its actual length and yet give the main purport of the speech. There was a very general complaint that the quality of the reporting done under the *Hansard* contract was very much inferior to the general reporting in the newspaper Press, and he did not see any reason why that should be so. If proper salaries were paid to the staff to do the work the contractor would be able to command the services of men who would give, not length, because it was not a question of the length of the report, but quality of condensation in those reports. He would like the Secretary of the Treasury to give the Committee, if he could, the exact figure of the increased cost caused by the new rule with regard to unstarred Questions, and how much of that cost might be saved if the Questions and Answers were printed continuously and on both sides of the paper, as the questions were printed on the Orders of the Day, instead of each Question and Answer occupying a separate sheet of paper. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £200.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £381,133, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Mr. ELLIOT, who was indistinctly heard in the Press gallery, said he was not surprised that the hon. Member complained that the Estimates, now that the war was at an end, had not fallen in so large a ratio as he would have expected. The Stationery Department was every year doing more and more, because in one way and another greater demands were made upon it. All sorts of Returns were asked for, and the printing of these involved greater expenditure. He found there was a considerably increased demand on the part of hon. Members to be supplied with the *Hansard* debates. The fact of the matter with reference to the Vote at large was, that if they looked around they would see that a greatly increased business had now to be done, and he believed it would be extremely difficult very largely to reduce the Vote, but he dared say that something might be done in this direction by care and by closely looking into details. But the Committee must not lose sight of the fact that it was an increasing business that the Department was doing, and that, consequently, they must expect a certain increase in the expenses. As to the reporting of *Hansard*, it was good that the Committee should know what the views of hon. Members were. Personally, he was very strongly opposed to the notion of anything like official reporting. Official reporting seemed to involve *verbatim* reporting, and the reporting of every word of every speech of every Member would make *Hansard* a more overwhelming, a more appalling publication than it was at present. He did not think the official reporting of their debates in Parliament had reached anything like a pitch of perfection, and therefore he welcomed the remarks of the hon. Member, and hoped they might do good, and tend to improve the way in which the work of *Hansard* was done. As to the hon. Member's reference to unstarred Questions, he would remind him that it was known perfectly well that to adopt the practice now in force would be a very expensive business. But there was great pressure on the part of the House in that direction, and the Government had only carried out the wishes of the House. His own opinion was that the change in the system of dealing with Questions was a change immensely for the better.

Mr. DALZIEL said the Committee were indebted to the hon. Member for Halifax for drawing attention to the increase which was going on with reference to the Stationery Department Vote. The subject of the *Hansard* reports was one which was raised almost every year when opportunity presented itself. His hon. friend had complained of the quality of the reporting. He himself could speak altogether without prejudice, because he had never once opened the proofs of his speeches which had been sent to him, because it did not interest him to read his own speeches. The present system of reporting the debates was of no value whatever to the House. What value could be attached to the reports when Members were permitted to take a half column out of their speeches and insert another, perhaps more pleasing to their constituents? So long as they allowed Members to alter their speeches they could never have a report of the proceedings of the House which could be of any value. Under the present system the reporting was a farce. A Committee which sat to consider the matter some years ago recommended the adoption of the American system—namely, the employment by the State of its own reporters, and the publication of a journal every morning giving fully the speeches of all Members, official and private alike, but allowing no alterations. Only to such a record could any reliability be attached. They should have a permanent and well-paid staff of reporters, and he hoped the new Secretary to the Treasury would look into this matter. By having a permanent staff of reporters, who would retain their situations irrespective of any change of contractors, they would be able to get the best men for the work they had to perform. The Stationery Department Estimates required, above all others, to be carefully scrutinised, and he suggested that the Treasury should appoint three or four experts to do nothing else than check the printing in the different Departments. The hon. Member complained of the delay which took place in the supply of Parliamentary papers because the printers did not do their work in time. The papers were supplied to the printers in plenty of time, but the delay in printing occurred on account of one or two particular firms getting too much of the work to do. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would keep in mind that this inconvenience might be obviated by a greater division of the labour. They ought not to be tied to any particular printer.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) did not agree with the view of the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs that the report of a speech was of no value unless it was given as delivered. The great models of Parliamentary eloquence in former times were not reported in the way speeches were now reported. Did the hon. Member suppose that the speeches of Burke were printed as they were spoken in the House? In those days reporting in the House was illegal, and Burke accordingly sent the manuscripts of his speeches to the Press. If speeches were recorded as delivered there would be so many "hums" and "haws" in the report that it would astonish the speaker. He was not sure that the present system was not the most convenient, because under it the reporters were able to produce in a consecutive form a speech which might be somewhat broken in delivery.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) complained that a Blue-book containing some of the despatches with reference to the negotiations before the war had been out of print for months and could not be obtained anywhere. It was a Blue-book for which there was a great demand.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said that many Members had expressed a great deal of discontent at the present condition of the Parliamentary reporting. They were often made to talk nonsense, and even to say precisely the opposite to what they did say. He agreed with his right hon. friend that a *verbatim* report would sometimes be hard on the speaker, but there was a certain consolation in seeing one's own "hums" and "haws" and not those invented by a reporter. The ideal would be to have reporters of such intelligence as to be able to put in felicitous language what a speaker intended to say, but if that ideal was not attainable, then it was desirable that the speaker should not be made to show an ignorance greater even than he really did show, and to use arguments which, from what he had previously said, were evidently contradictory. He protested also against the burden thrown on Members of correcting the reports sent to them. He hoped his hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury would give this subject his attention.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 58; Noes, 112. (Division List No. 64.)

AYES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, George M, (*Edinburgh*)

Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Channing, Francis Allston
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. *Leicester*
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hutchinson, Dr Charles Fredk.
Jones, W. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Levy, Maurice
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. J. H. Whitley and Mr. Dalziel.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brymer, William Ernest
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Greene, Sir E W (*B'ry S Edm'nds*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (*Hanley*
Heath, James (*Staffords, N. W.*
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N. R.*
Johnstone, Heywood
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, David J. (*Walthamst'w*
Morgan, David J. (*Carmarthen*
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,264, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under The Light Railways Act, 1896."

MR. DALZIEL said that on page 88 there was a salary of £800 given to a British non-resident Director of the Suez Canal, and in a footnote it was stated that this gentleman received £950 per annum, paid by the Board of Superannuation, as late Deputy Master of the Mint. It would appear, therefore, that this gentleman, who had been retired as too old to undertake the responsible duty connected with the Mint, was immediately provided with another billet, carrying a salary of £800 per annum for discharging duties much more responsible than those from which he had been retired. Some explanation was due to the Committee in regard to this matter.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he wished to draw attention to the differentiation of the pay of upper division clerks in various Government Departments. He would like to know why the upper division clerks at the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board were paid so much less than similar clerks at the Treasury, the Home Office, and the Colonial Office. All of them had to pass the same examination, and their qualifications were equal. As Bill after Bill became law each session, new responsibilities were thrown on the clerks at the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board, and their duties were certainly as important as those carried out by the Home Office and the Colonial Office clerks. It was generally known that gentlemen who had influence were placed in the more favourable offices. He hoped that a Departmental Committee would consider the matter of levelling up the salaries of the upper division clerks at the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board to those of the Treasury, the Home Office, and Colonial Office; or, if not, of levelling the latter down to the scale of the former.

MR. DEWAR (Inverness) said he wished to draw attention to a small matter on page 87, under the Exchequer Department in Scotland. He found that the chief clerk was receiving £650 per annum, although the maximum salary of the office should be only £600; and in a footnote it was stated that the same gentleman received £150 as Secretary to the Congested Districts Board. He objected to a chief clerk dividing his attention between two such entirely different Departments. He did not think it could add to the efficiency of the Exchequer Office, and he was perfectly certain it prevented efficiency at the Congested Districts Board. He begged to move, as a protest, the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,164, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Dewar.*)

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he was glad that his hon. friend had brought this very serious question before the Committee, and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman would not withdraw his Motion. This clerk was engaged by the Exchequer Office in Scotland, but was taken away to discharge duties in another Department which would absorb the whole of his time. He objected altogether to this system of dual offices, and he hoped that the new Financial Secretary would put a stop to it.

MR. ELLIOT said he did not profess to be well acquainted with the specific duties of the Chief Clerk in the Exchequer Office in Scotland, and he could only say he would look carefully into the matter and see whether the present arrangement was one which ought to be continued in the future. In reference to the matter of the Directorship of the Suez Canal being given to the late Deputy Master of the Mint, he could only say that the appointment had given general satisfaction. His hon. friend had raised a point as to levelling up the salaries of different clerks in different offices, [Mr. HAY: Or levelling down.] but he would remind his hon. friend that these salaries were carefully gone over from time to time.

MR. DEWAR said he certainly thought it would be dangerous to pass the Vote with the footnote attached.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the Secretary to the Treasury had not answered his question. He had told them that the salaries were not fixed but were subject to alteration from time to time. What he understood was that the pay in the Colonial Office, the Home Office, and the Treasury, for the first and second grades was sensibly better than that under the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board. Was there any intention of revising the pay of these offices in accordance with the recommendation of the Ridley Commission, which in this case at any rate had been departed from by the Treasury? Would the question of levelling up or down, as the case might be, be favourably considered by the Departmental Committee promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with respect to the duties of the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade?

MR. DALZIEL hoped that before another year came round the hon. Gentleman would look into this matter and try and make the Vote more acceptable to the Committee. He would like to point out that one gentleman who received a Government pension of £950 a year acted as a non-resident Suez Canal director, with an additional £800 a year, and that he was also a Secretary to the British Embassy, and a commercial *attaché* in France, in Belgium, and in Switzerland. How could he act in three different countries and satisfactorily perform the duties of the five different offices?

MR. WHITLEY said there appeared to be something mysterious about these Suez Canal directors. They were appointed and paid in a different manner, and seeing that one of them held five different offices, surely the matter was one deserving of investigation at the hands of the Secretary to the Treasury. There must be plenty of persons capable of filling these places without it being necessary to appoint to them persons who had already served full time in their own Departments and had retired on honourable pensions.

MR. ELLIOT was understood to say in reply that the arrangement was in no way opposed to the prime interests of this country. In answer to the hon. Member for the Shoreditch Division of Hoxton, he could only say that the Departmental Committee appointed a short time ago would have to take into consideration the question of the differences of pay in different Departments and make recommendations thereupon.

Mr. DALZIEL was surprised and disappointed that the hon. Gentleman had become so excellent an official in so short a time. From the manner in which he had spoken one would think he had been at the Treasury thirty years. They certainly had expected him to give them some grounds for hoping for a better state of things. When he remembered the enthusiasm with which the hon Gentleman used to attack anything in the nature of a job from below the gangway, he had hoped that the new Secretary to the Treasury would have undertaken to give close attention to these matters. He had not convinced the Committee that a paid Secretary to the Embassy at Paris could be a director of the Suez Canal, and at the same time look after the commercial interests of this country in France, Belgium, and Switzerland. He was surprised and disappointed that the hon. Member should have taken so small a view of the duties of commercial *attachés* whose task it was to look out for trade and to watch our vast commercial interests. The Deputy Master of the Mint, who had recently retired on a pension of £950, had been appointed a director of the Suez Canal with a salary of £800 a year. If he had been a humbler individual, the probability was that his pension would have been reduced proportionately, but that had not been done in this case. He totally disagreed with the hon. Gentleman when he told them that the duties of the five offices held by one gentleman could be satisfactorily performed by an official resident in Paris.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY complained that the vague reply made had not answered his question why the recommendation of the Ridley Commission had been departed from, and why uniformity had not been introduced into the salaries in the several Departments he had referred to. He was not satisfied to be put off with a few vague phrases to the effect that the matter would be considered next year.

Question put.

Committee divided:—Ayes, 49; Noes 115. (Division List No. 65.)

AYES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (*Edinburgh*
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Delany, William
Doogan, P. C.
Fenwick, Charles
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, RtHn. Herbert John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, W. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kitson, Sir James
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Dewar and Mr. Dalziel.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Greene, Sir E W (*B'ry S Edm'nds*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*)
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, Arthur Howard (*Hanley*
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hutton, John (*Yorks. N. R.*)
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, David J. (*Walthamst'w*
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lt.-Col. Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wilson, A. S. (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

MR. DALZIEL asked if the Government were given the Vote, they would be prepared to report Progress.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said if the Vote were passed, he would be prepared to accept the Motion that Progress be reported.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) moved: "That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Law that they have power to extend the County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill to Scotland."

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) asked whether the Motion was in order under Standing Order 15, which said that on an allotted day no business other than Supply could be taken before midnight. That Rule was made with the express purpose of shutting out Motions such as that of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: That is so; I had forgotten this was an allotted day.

Adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 22nd April, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL.

"To regulate the expenditure of money by the London County Council on Capital Account during the current financial period, and the raising of money to meet such expenditure," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State under the Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, relating to land in the Royal Borough of Kensington, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under the Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, relating to land in the Royal Borough of Kensington," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills; and to be printed. [Bill 158.]

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Birley (No. 1); Wharton Hall; Batley (No. 1); Markham; Dunston; Killamarsh; Blackrod; Dearham; Seaton Moor; Clifton; Watergate; Ellenborough; Buckhill; St. Helens; Robin Hood; Bulgill; Lanarkshire; Kilburn; Millbridge; Liversedge; Camerton; and, Pilsey Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Sheffield; Worthing; Clitheroe; Keighley; Dunstable; Poole; Hove; Longton; and Margate; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Mauchline; Dunfermline; and Fodderty; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petition from Sunderland, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Stranraer; and Forres; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bridgeton; Glasgow (four); Dundee (two); and Edinburgh (three); to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions for alteration of law: from Evesham; Burton-upon-Trent; Stockport; Padiham; and Longton; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Worcester, against; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition from Dunfermline, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Redditch; Soho; and Margate; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Hungerford; and Vernham's Dean; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Birley No. 1; Wharton Hall; Soothill Wood; Batley No. 1; Markham; Dunston; Killamarsh; Blackrod; St. Helens; Dearham; Seaton Moor; Clifton; Watergate; Ellenborough; Buckhill; Robin Hood; Bulgill; Lanarkshire; Kilburn; Millbridge; Liversedge; Camerton; and Pilsey Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES (REMOVAL) BILL.

Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT) (CHANGES IN WAGES, ETC.)

Copy presented, of Report on Changes in Rates of Wages and Hours of Labour in the United Kingdom, 1902, with Comparative Statistics for 1893–1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cost of Military Operations in Somaliland.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the total cost of all military operations, whether chargeable on local, Indian, or Imperial funds, which have taken place in Somaliland during the past ten years, including the two Jubaland Expeditions and the Aysa Expedition of 1893.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) Any expenditure previous to 1898 was defrayed by the Government of India, and any question relative thereto should be addressed to the India Office. Since the date when the Somaliland Protectorate Administration was taken over by the Foreign Office from the Government of India (1898) the sums expended on military operations in that Protectorate have been—1900–1, £29,670 13s. 9d.; 1901–2, £46,775; 1902 (to 30th September), £13,009 19s. 4d.; Total, £89,455 13s. 1d. I would call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that the Jubaland Expeditions were conducted in territory subject to the East African Protectorate and not to the Somaliland Protectorate. As regards these expeditions the expenditure was—1898 Expedition, £9,264 3s. 6d.; 1900–1 Expedition, £132,210 0s. 4d.; Total, £141,474 3s. 10d. Grand Total, Somaliland and Jubaland War Expenditure under the Foreign Office, £230,929 16s. 11d. The military operations at present carried on against the Mullah are conducted under the direction of the War Office, to whom any questions as to expenditure should be addressed.

State Forests.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of the recommendations of the Committee on British Forestry, he will consider the advisability of establishing a State forest in Scotland or of acquiring smaller areas as example plots for instruction in forestry.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) I am unable to express any opinion upon the

Report until I have had an opportunity of reading the evidence, which is not yet published.

Boarded-out Children.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of children now boarded out in England and Wales, distinguishing between those boarded out within and those without the Union.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of children boarded out in England and Wales on the 1st January last was 8,250. Of these 6,394 were boarded within the Union and 1,856 beyond the Union.

Status of Storehouse Men in Dockyards.

Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether a decision has been reached yet concerning the increase of establishment of storehouse men and storehouse labourers in His Majesty's Dockyards which has for some time been under consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The question of the reorganisation of the storehouse staff is not yet finally settled, but it is hoped that a decision will be arrived at shortly.

Translation of Ancient Irish Manuscripts.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the intention of the Government in withdrawing ancient Irish manuscripts publication from the Master of the Rolls series was to secure effective editing under the responsible supervision of the Royal Irish Academy; whether the effect has been to reduce the sums made available by the Treasury for such translations; and will he ascertain how soon the translation of "Tigernach," to which scholars attach much value, will be put in hand.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) The Hon. Member is, I think, under some misapprehension. There has been no transfer of the publication of ancient Irish manuscripts from the Master of the Rolls series to the Royal Irish Academy. Ancient Celtic manuscripts (with the exception of the Ancient Laws of Ireland including the Brehon Laws which are published by a special commission) are produced under the direction of the Royal Irish Academy, which has long been specially concerned with this work, and which has received in addition to its grant various sums for the publication of the "Annals of Ulster." I am sorry to find that the Royal Irish Academy are disinclined, with their present means, to undertake the translation of the "Annals of Tigernach."

Irish Education — Salary of Assistant Teacher at Kilkitt.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Irish National Education Office refuse to pay salary to the assistant teacher of Kilkitt National School, County Monaghan, for the last two quarters of the year 1901; and whether, seeing that the Rule, viz. 206 (b), upon which this refusal is based did not appear among the rules of the Commissioners of Irish National Education till 1902, and that the average in this school was sufficiently high according to the rules of the Education Office, will he take steps to secure that the salary for these two quarters shall be paid to this teacher.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The average attendance of pupils at this school failed to reach the minimum of sixty required for payment of salary to an assistant teacher in the last two quarterly periods of 1900, and each of the four quarterly periods of 1901. Salary was, however, paid to 30th June, 1901 under the exceptional circumstances of the case—the prevalence of epidemics in the neighbourhood of the school. The refusal to pay salary for the last two quarters of 1901 was not based on Rule 206 (b) of the existing Code, but on the regulations in force at the time. Rule 206 (e) enabled the Commissioners to restore the grant to the assistant teacher from 1st January, 1902, which has been done.

Training of Louth Militia.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as the Louth Militia have now for some years been trained outside the county for brigade drill, they will this year be trained at home; and is the Dundalk Rifle Range now availed of by the military authorities for any purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This battalion, together with the other Militia battalions of the Royal Irish Rifles, will be trained at Ballykinler in July next. The Dundalk Range will be used for the annual musketry practice of Royal Field Artillery batteries and for training reservists.

Reports on Nigeria—Delay in Publication.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that the annual Reports on Northern and Southern Nigeria for 1901 were not presented until January and February, 1903, he will take steps to expedite the publication of the Reports for 1902 and future years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have already had the question of expediting the publication of these Reports under consideration, and steps are being taken to that end.

Civil Service Estimates—Class 7, Vote 2.

Mr. FITZROY (Northamptonshire, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give an opportunity at an early date of discussing Civil Service Estimates, Class 7, Vote 2.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I shall be glad to consult the general convenience of the House about putting down this Estimate; but I do not think it will be possible to fix an early date for its discussion.

———

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

———

1st Vol. Batt. Seaforth Highlanders.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that several men in the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders, who have joined the Lovat Scouts, are unable to obtain a written discharge from the Officer Commanding the Volunteers; and, seeing that their retention in the Scouts is subject to the production of such discharge, will he have some inquiry made with a view to ascertain why it is withheld.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I am informed that all the men belonging to the 1st Volunteer Battalion Seaforth Highlanders who have applied for their discharges to join the Lovat Scouts have been given them.

Mr. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that some of these discharges have been withheld for several weeks? Will he make further inquiry?

Mr. BRODRICK: I cannot give the hon. Gentleman any further information.

Mr. WEIR: I shall raise the question on the Estimates.

Workmen's Compensation Act—Medical Referees

Mr. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state in how many cases medical referees under the Workmen's Compensation Act have been called in to assist the county court judges during the last year for which Returns are available.

The UNDER SECRETARY to the HOME OFFICE (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.): The number of cases in England during 1902 in which a reference was made to the medical referees was eighty-six. Thirty-nine of the references were by county court judges, the remainder by arbitrators and arbitration committees. The number of references in 1901 was eighty-three. The number of references in Scotland during 1902 was sixty-one—in Ireland two.

Sugar, Coal and Corn Duties.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many additional persons have been employed by the Customs since the introduction of the sugar tax and the corn tax, and what additional expense has their employment involved.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Elliot, Durham): I have to state on behalf of my right hon. friend that it is difficult to separate the increased staff required for the sugar tax from the increase rendered necessary by the simultaneous imposition of the coal duties. The introduction of these two duties, together with the corn duties, involved an increase of 444 persons, and an additional expense for pay and allowances, travelling, clothing, and law charges of £57,600 per annum.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it will be necessary under the terms of the Brussels Convention to place the sugar refineries of this country in bond; and, if so, what will be the cost of supervising these refineries when bonded, and who will bear the cost.

Mr. ELLIOT: Under Article II. of the Sugar Convention it will be necessary to place sugar refineries in this country in bond. The cost of supervising the refineries, when bonded, will be borne by the Crown, as in the case of ordinary bonded warehouses. It is too soon to estimate accurately what the cost will amount to, but there will be considerable compensatory additions to the Revenue.

Holyrood Palace.

Sir J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow College): May I ask the hon. Member for the Ramsey Division if he can make any statement with regard to the drainage of Holyrood Palace?

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): Yes; the position with regard to the drainage of Holyrood Palace is as follows: Last autumn certain defects in the drainage were observed, and a thorough inquiry was made. From the report it appeared that the sanitary condition of the Palace, although satisfactory at most points, was not such as to make it a desirable residence for a large number of persons until certain sanitary defects had been remedied. The Office of Works submitted the report to their sanitary advisers, who advised that it was not desirable in these circumstances that their Majesties should reside at the Palace, although there was no objection to the use of the buildings for levées and receptions by day. The Earl of Leven and Melville felt equally that he would not be justified in occupying the Palace with a large suite. Unfortunately, the new works demanded a great deal of excavation, and it was only possible to carry them out in open weather. The work has consequently been postponed until after the visit of their Majesties, as, had it been begun in the winter, there would have been serious risk of its remaining uncompleted before the Royal visit.

The Bagdad Railway.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask whether the Government propose to afford the House an opportunity of discussing the participation of this country in the scheme for the construction of the Bagdad Railway?

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): I do not think that is a question my hon. friend has any right to put.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to say the hon. Gentleman is not a judge of the rights of Members.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): May I ask what will be the business on Tuesday and Wednesday next?

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD: As the House is aware, the business to-morrow will be the Budget; but, in order to comply with the provisions of the new Supply Rule, it will be necessary at the commencement of public business to move a Resolution giving Ways and Means Committee precedence over other business of Supply, and also to suspend the Twelve o'Clock Rule. On Monday the Vote of Censure will be taken. With regard to Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, inquiries are being made as to the relative convenience of taking either the Irish Land Bill or the London Education Bill, and the decision of the Government will be announced at seven o'clock.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): So far as the Irish Members are concerned, their convenience will be met by taking the Irish Land Bill on the earliest possible day.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: The question is whether the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill can be taken on the whole of Tuesday and the afternoon sitting on Wednesday. If not, I think it may be for the convenience of the House to take the London Education Bill rather than to have a debate on the Irish Land Bill and adjourn it until the following week.

MR. LOUGH: Why does the hon. Gentleman assume that the discussion on the London Education Bill will be shorter than the debate on the Irish Land Bill? I think it will be much longer.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Cannot we go on with the debate on Thursday?

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: No. We must take Supply in accordance with the Standing Order.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked when the succeeding Budget Resolutions would be taken.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said, according to precedent, one Resolution would be taken at the close of the discussion tomorrow night, and the Report of that Resolution would possibly be taken after twelve o'clock on Monday night. He could not say when the succeeding Resolutions would be taken.

MR. CHANNING: Are the succeeding Resolutions likely to be taken on Thursday week?

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said he could not go as far as that.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER asked whether his hon. friend would consider the expediency of guarding against the confusion which prevailed last year and the year before as to the general discussion. It was pointed out that certain Resolutions must be passed for reasons connected with the Department, and that a general discussion would be allowed subsequently. He hoped that point had been considered.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I will mention that matter to the Leader of the House.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure: Mr. Attorney-General; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Solicitor-General.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered that Mr. Hayes Fisher be discharged, and Mr. Arthur Elliot be added to the Committee.—(*Sir. A. Acland-Hood.*)

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

CLASS II.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £139,395, be granted to His Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments, including a Grant in Aid."

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he desired to draw attention to the question of railway rates, which the President of the Board of Agriculture had suggested was a matter for the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman, in speaking on the point, had suggested that for one Department to draw the attention of another Department to a subject of this nature, was as difficult as it was for one nation to approach another, and he had thrown out a hint that the Board of Trade was not giving all the assistance it could in the matter. That certainly ought not to be the case. What agriculturists wanted was that the Board of Trade should take up this question on their behalf and ask the railway companies to reconsider their rates generally in the interests both of agriculturists and small traders, who were not in a position to protect themselves. These classes particularly needed this help, for they were not organised like the big industries. If the President of the Board of Trade were as alive to the interest and urgency of this matter, so far as it affected his Department, as the President of the Board of Agriculture was, he would look into the question and bring such powers as he possessed to bear upon the railway companies in order to help the small trader and the small agriculturist. Why was it, for instance, that the Great Eastern Railway Company charged only a very moderate rate for the carriage of agricultural produce, while the Great Western charged excessive sums for exactly the same kind of work? Again, the London and North Western carried 48 lbs. of agricultural produce a distance of thirty miles for 6d., whereas the Great Eastern carried the same kind of produce seventy-two miles for a like amount. Why should these discrepancies exist? Again, the Great Eastern carried a cwt. of agricultural produce thirty miles for 9d. at owner's risk, while the Great Northern and Great Central charged 1s. 2d., and the Great Western 1s. 5d. Could not the right hon. Gentleman look into these matters? Surely if he had no power to act he could remonstrate.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): No.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said the Board of Trade at any rate did remonstrate on occasions. These were not the only discrepancies which gave rise to complaint. He thought they also had good reason to protest against the bad system which the companies were now adopting of setting up such rates as "owner's risk" rates, and telling their customers that they must either adopt those rates or be bound by the companies' statutory rates. Surely the President of the Board of Trade could interfere in matters of this kind. The imposition of minimum rates often prevented a farmer supplying his produce direct to the consumer in large cities. He had known cases in which farmers had desired to supply milk to London Clubs, but had found it impossible to do so because the companies insisted on a minimum charge which put a prohibitive price upon the produce. He wished the right hon. Gentleman, who seemed to look at these matters from the point of view of a railway director, would take up the attitude which had been adopted by the President of the Board of Agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be amused at that suggestion, but he could assure him that agriculturists had the greatest possible confidence in the President of the Board of Agriculture, and it would be well if the traders of this country could feel equal confidence in the President of the Board of Trade. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take that opportunity of promising to do something to help the small agriculturist and trader, and in order to give him a chance of so doing, he begged to move a reduction of his salary by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said he wished to associate himself with the spirit of the remarks of the hon. Baronet, though he did not think it necessary to draw a comparison between the *personnel* of two Government Departments. The question of railway rates was far more important and pressing than the President of the Board of Trade seemed to imagine. Ten years ago the Member for South Islington moved in that House a Resolution condemning the railway companies for the use they made of their powers under the Act of 1892, and the result was that a Committee was appointed to inquire into the matter. That Committee unanimously agreed upon certain recommendations, some of which he feared had not been carried out. The attitude of the railway companies was pretty severely condemned in the Committee's Report, and they then looked, as they now looked, to the Board of Trade to protect the interest of the public in the matter of railway rates. The present state of matters, when any one who had dealings with the railway companies with respect to the transit of commodities on a small scale found it very difficult to get to know the precise rates the companies were authorised by statute to charge, left very much to be desired. He strongly urged the President of the Board of Trade to look into the Report of the Select Committee on Railway Rates of 1893 and to keep an open ear to the complaints that came before the Department from time to time. He desired especially to call attention to the administration of the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, an Act which resulted from the appointment of a Royal Commission in 1899, of which Lord James of Hereford was President, and on which he had the honour of sitting. That Commission investigated the question of the lamentable number of deaths and injuries among railway employees, and it unanimously decided that the number was unnecessarily great. Upon their Report the then President of the Board of Trade, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought in a Bill which became law in the following year, and it was in reference to the administration of that Act that he wished to say a few words that afternoon. He thought the Committee had some reason to complain that it was only that afternoon that they had been furnished by the Department with the figures for last year. He hoped the new Financial Secretary to the Treasury would endeavour to secure a reform in that direction in future years. These Reports ought certainly to be presented to the House before Easter in each year.

Mr. John Ellis.

Now the figures for last year showed there were 435 deaths of servants of railway companies, excluding servants of contractors, and 3,806 injuries, and all must acknowledge that the tale of killed and wounded was too high. He believed a strong administration of the Act would effect a great reduction in these figures. The Act gave the Board of Trade power to make rules, under twelve specific heads, which would ensure greater safety to railway servants. These rules dealt with technical matters, such as the provision of brake locks on both sides of a wagon. The twelve rules were understood by the Royal Commission to have been agreed to by the railway companies, yet three of them had not been carried out, the railway companies having objected and interposed unexpected and rather, as he thought, unreasonable delays. The Board of Trade ought to insist, in the strongest possible way, on all the twelve rules being carried out. There was no question, speaking broadly, but that the greater number of the railway companies provided most efficient appliances for the safety of life and limb, but in the case of railways, as well as of mines, it was necessary that the State should lay a heavy hand on the laggards. That duty was placed in the hands of the President of the Board of Trade, but he ventured to say, he hoped respectfully and not discourteously, that the right hon. Gentleman was a little too frightened of exercising the powers he possessed. He was well aware of the delicacy of the relations between a State Department and employers of labour, but they ought to lay down the principle that the safety of life and limb should be the paramount interest, at whatever cost. He meant to say nothing that would reflect on the personal desire of the right hon. Gentleman to carry out this duty, and he hoped that discussion would nerve his arm to carry out the Acts. Speaking as a shareholder in railway companies he had always held that safety of life and limb was paramount, and that no dividends should be paid until the safety of every one employed on a railway was assured. He hoped the result of that discussion would be that the Board of Trade would see that the railway companies carried out the Acts of Parliament in the spirit in which they were passed, and would thus secure absolute safety of life and limb for railway servants.

*MR. BELL (Derby) rose to support the remarks of the last speaker, and at the same time to add a few observations of his own in regard to the question of hours worked by railway servants. The President of the Board of Trade in August last, replying to a Question, stated that the special Return he had obtained in the previous December of the hours of railway men was so unsatisfactory that in the following December he would call for another. He appreciated the kindness of the right hon. Gentleman, but felt that he then made a great error in notifying the railway companies four months beforehand that he was going to call for another return. He would preface his remarks by saying that he had always endeavoured to substantiate his points, and to state nothing but facts. There were no employers more ingenious than the railway companies in deceiving the Board of Trade when a Return was desired. He did not apply this remark to the directors or the managers of railways, but to the subordinate officials, who deceived their chiefs, and through them the Department. Two years ago he complained of the indifferent manner in which the Board of Trade carried out the Act of 1893, and of the undue delay in attending to complaints. He had now to make the same complaint again. In December 1899 he complained to the Board of Trade as to the hours of the men employed at the Motherwell depôt on the Caledonian railway, and gave examples, and in February 1902 he repeated the complaint. In both cases he received a formal acknowledgment, but he had received no further reply, and he had been recently informed that the hours worked by the men at that depôt were still the same as in December 1899. He was sure the House would bear with him and would agree with him that for such an enormous amount of time to be occupied in looking into a matter of this description was very unsatisfactory. It would seem that the company's officials hoodwink the Board of Trade. They did not bring a full and correct report to the Board of Trade, or make a special effort to obtain the information required by the Department, so as to let them know the exact and normal working of the employees. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade notified the companies that he was going to call for a Return for December, and the companies, almost without exception, sent private—or he should not use the word "private," but official circulars round warning their people what to do for December. He had a few of these circulars with him, and he would read them. He would read one or two and ask the House to accept the others as being somewhat similar. Here was one—

"GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

"District Superintendent's Office.

"Swansea, November 29th, 1902.

"*Hours of Goods Guards.*

"Dear Sir.—Relief guards have been put on at Carmarthen Junction, Landore and Neath, and I wish you to personally instruct your guards to wire well in advance for relief when they are likely to be on duty over twelve hours.

"Acknowledge receipt,

"(Signed) J. REES."

It was possible that neither the Directors nor the General Manager knew anything about this circular. This was issued on November 29th in view of the Returns which we wanted being taken in December. But so anxious is Mr. Rees to see that the hours worked in December were not more than twelve hours per day that he sent round another circular as follows:—

"GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

"District Superintendent's Office.

"Swansea, December 3rd, 1902.

"*Long Hours of Goods Guards.*

"In cases where guards have been on duty long hours and relief could not be obtained, they should show on their journals at what station application for relief was made; also the times of booking on and off duty.

"(Signed) J. REES."

Directly the month of December was out it was a matter of indifference to Mr. Rees whether the men worked twelve hours a day or not. On January 12th Mr. Rees issued the following circular:—

"GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

"Divisional Superintendent's Office.

"Swansea, January 12th, 1903.

"*Relief to Goods Guards.*

"Dear Sir.—You may now discontinue sending me the daily returns of goods guards relieved. I must, however, ask you to see personally that sufficient guards are booked out for relief purposes, and also to spare no effort in keeping the hours of the goods guards as near as possible to sixty hours per week.

"The guards must also be reminded that they must continue to wire forward for relief when they are likely to be out about twelve hours or more.—Yours truly,

"J. REES."

It would seem that he urged the officials to do their utmost to get the hours down so that they should not exceed sixty a week. For railway men to work sixty hours a week was one of those things he had always complained of. He had frequently spoken strongly against it. It frequently happened that the men were called upon to work excessively long hours for three or four days in the week, and then play off for one or two days, so that at the end of the week they might not have done more than sixty hours. He had objected to the sixty hours because it gave local officials power to work men on as many days as they liked exceptionally long hours so long as they gave them relief for a day or two during the week in order to keep their average down to sixty hours. Then he had another circular relating to the Great Central Railway:—

"GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY.

"Locomotive Department.

"Wigan, December 1st, 1902.

"*Notice to Drivers and Firemen.*

"All men are hereby instructed that in the event of delays taking place when working trains which may prevent them from working through to destination without being on duty twelve hours or over, relief must be obtained at the nearest convenient point to avoid this. Besides all locomotive depôts men are employed at Guide Bridge, Barnsley Junction, Stairfoot, and Broughton Lane.

"Special arrangements will be made at these places and at Mexboro', Sheffield, Retford, and Barnetby; and in addition to applying to the foreman or loco. inspector in charge, drivers must give the longest possible notice by wire from any station or signal box if they had been on duty long enough before reaching such places as to incur any chance of twelve hours being exceeded before booking off in the ordinary way.

"(By order) —GREEN, Foreman."

Mr. Bell.

A strong point he had to make was that from Manchester the officials of the Great Central Railway Company sent orders to Ardwick, where they had a large number of train men employed, such as "for twenty-six goods guards to be prepared to go with the 6.25 train on Monday"—that would be on the 1st December or the first working day in December—"and take up duty at various places along the line *viâ* Barnsley Junction, Sheffield, Woodhouse, Beighton, Godley, Dunford and Macclesfield." These men were simply sent round in this way during December in order that relief might be provided, care being taken that the goods guards should not under any circumstances make more than twelve hours a day during that month. When December was over then these men returned to their own stations, and so far as the company was concerned—or the local officials—little thought or care had been given about the matter since. Then the North British Railway Company issued a circular—

"NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY.

"District Traffic Superintendent's Office.

"Coatbridge.

"*Long Hours of Trainmen.*

"During the month of December there must not be any interference with the booked working of trains without authority, and only by suspension after all concerned have been consulted.

"All concerned are requested to do their very utmost to keep the hours of all trains within the proper limit. Yours truly,

"ALEX. KIDD."

That was issued by Alexander Kidd, and he presumed he was the district officer of the North British Railway Company for the Coatbridge district. He specified particulars during the month of December, but there was another North British circular from Mr. T. Philip, of the Carlisle district of the same Company—

"NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY.

"Carlisle, 17th November, 1902.

"*Hours of Duty.*

"Please report specially to me daily from now to 31st of December, every case in which the day of any one of your block signalmen exceeds twelve hours from start to finish and the cause thereof. Every effort must be made to keep the signalmen's hours within the limit.

"(Signed) T. PHILIP."

Here was a very significant circular from the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland, dated November 25th—

"GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

"November, 25th, 1902.

"*Signalmen and Shunters, etc., Working over Twelve Hours per Day.*

"Dear Sir.—I have a particular reason why this Return rendered to the Superintendent of the Line from the stations in my district should be *nil* for the month of December. I must, therefore, ask you personally to see that no man at your station is allowed to work beyond the allowed hours, but, if necessary, a fresh man to be put to do the work by calling upon an adjacent station for assistance, or communicating with me in ample time. Anyway, as already stated, there must be no working over hours, and I look to you personally to prevent it. Acknowledge.

"(Signed) W. BEDDOES."

He had several more of these circulars, but he thought it was hardly worth while to weary the House with them. He was sure the House would accept from him that the whole of the circulars were to the same effect as those he had read. Now that, in his opinion, proved conclusively that when the Board of Trade did try to put into operation the powers they had under the Act that was in existence, in the interest of the employees on the railways, advantage was taken of them by the local officials in this manner. As he said before, he did not attach blame to the directors or the high officials. He did not believe that the directors of the companies, or even the managers, were familiar with this kind of thing. He had no doubt the last circular he had read, and one or two of the others, had emanated solely from local officials, and that no director in the House would be able to say that he was aware that such a circular had been issued. What he desired to see was that the Department should get some explanation from the managers and some undertaking to look into the matter. Managers might say that these things did not occur, but as a matter of fact they did. He was happy to be able to say that the hours of railway workers had been greatly reduced from what they were; still they were considerably above what would appear to be the case from the Return for December which the right hon. Gentleman is having prepared. He was not going to dwell any longer on the hours question. He had said sufficient about that to show how the matter stood, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would give attention to it. He had anticipated being able to deal with it last year, but he had not had an opportunity of speaking on the Board of Trade Estimate, so that he had to forego the matter.

The next point he had to mention was one his hon. friend the Member for Rushcliffe had spoken upon, viz, railway accidents amongst railway workers. The railway companies dealt with the Board of Trade in this matter just as they did in regard to the question of the hours of railway men—not, perhaps, with the acquiescence or knowledge of the directors or chief officials. These latter were advised by their subordinates. When they asked for information, misleading information was supplied to them by people who wanted to save themselves from a difficulty, and to obviate the evil he would suggest — and this he would press most strongly on the Board of Trade—that there should be an additional number of sub-inspectors appointed — sub-inspectors to deal exclusively with railway matters under the Accidents Act, 1900. He found there was already an item on the Estimates for two additional sub-inspectors. It was on the Estimates for last year. There was a similar item on the Estimates the year before. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman had got the money for two additional sub-inspectors for three years, and yet they had not been appointed. He maintained that it was absolutely necessary that these men should be appointed at the earliest possible moment. He ventured to anticipate that the reply of the right hon. Gentleman would be that the companies were doing all in their power to carry out the new rules. But that was what any employer might say. There was no employer, be he one of the slow ones referred to by his right hon. friend, or be he one who had desired to see these rules carried into effect, who could not say that. But, as the House knew, they had had since 1900 an Act for the prevention of accidents to railway servants, and the strange part of it is that while they had an Act specifically for the purpose of preventing railway accidents (which was a laudable thing as far as it went), yet the officers of the Board of Trade did not put into force their powers with a view to preventing accidents from happening, but simply to deal with accidents after they had happened. That was not satisfactory to him, and he did impress on the President of the Board of Trade the necessity of doing something—anything which was in his power—to prevent these accidents from occurring. He found that the Home Office had 120 inspectors and assistant and sub-inspectors under the Factory and Workshops Act They had thirty-eight inspectors and assistant inspectors under the Mines Act; that was 158 inspectors to carry out the Factory and Workshops and Mines Acts, whilst at the Board of Trade, to deal with an industry which employed so many hundreds of thousands of men, and which was so much more dangerous than that of the factories and workshops, they had none. He found that railway employees were so divided that one section came under the Home Office, and these, though employed in work that was less dangerous than that of the train men, had inspectors to watch their interests, whilst the others had not. In the former group there were 100,000 men, whilst in the latter under the Board of Trade, whose work was far more dangerous, there were 200,000. He pleaded for these that the two inspectors for whom the right hon. Gentleman had the money should be appointed. He had had their salaries for two years and was now asking for another £400. But he would not dwell further on the subject. Here were the Board of Trade Rules. They had been issued by the Board of Trade, and the House was familiar with them. He had also with him the Act which gives power of inspection to the Board of Trade in this matter. Section 13 says—

> "The powers of the Board of Trade for the inspection of railways shall include power to inspect any railway for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is any ground for proceeding under this Act, or whether there has been any contravention of, or default in compliance with, any rule made under this Act."

Mr. Bell.

That was clear and distinct as to where there should be inspection, but, again, he desired to point out, as he did in reference to the question of hours, that the railway companies had a way of deceiving the Board of Trade when they make inquiries. One Clause of the Act —Clause 15—said that the Board of Trade might, with the concurrence of the Treasury, appoint or employ such persons as appeared to them to be required for carrying the Act into effect, and might hold such inquiries and make such experiments as they thought expedient for that purpose. The companies all fought the Board of Trade in this matter, and he was happy to say that the Board of Trade fought them, and he never neglected to render the Board what assistance he could. One particular company fought the Board of Trade, even getting an adjournment of an inquiry and a re-hearing of the case before the Railway and Canal Commissioners, and that was the Taff Vale Railway Company. On the Penarth Branch they run trains of fifty or sixty trucks and the men have to ride on the trucks without any protection whatever. The Railway and Canal Commissioners decided that there should be brake vans on these trains, but the railway company protested against this. He did not believe that brake vans were being run there yet. He was glad to say that the Board of Trade sent down their Chief Inspector, Colonel Yorke, in whom everybody had full confidence, in order to see what arrangements had been made for the working of the traffic. On the day of Colonel Yorke's visit the railway company put in operation a system of working which they had never done before. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to look into this matter before the Board gave its decision. Let the Board of Trade send down some one on a day known only to the Board itself to see how the work could be done. He had furnished the Board with details of the working. He was bound to say that this was playing fast and loose with an important Department of the State and with the House of Commons. Humble Member though he was, he could assure the Committee that he was not going to sit down and allow this sort of thing to go by when an opportunity presented itself for bringing it forward.

He had a complaint to make in regard to the right hon. Gentleman's own Department. He had failed to impress on the permanent officials of the Department the absolute necessity of carrying out the Acts of Parliament as the Home Office did in all cases. He frequently got complaints from men as to danger arising from want of protection, and when he submitted them to the Department he was asked whether the men themselves had laid the complaints direct before their employers. He would ask the Committee what was the use of the Act of Parliament? The Act was passed to give these men the opportunity of having their hours regulated and that they might have their lives and limbs protected without having to make complaints direct to the employers. There were too many men who would have to suffer if they had courage enough to call the attention of officials to complaints of this description. He had in his hand a communication from the Board of Trade, dated 18th December, with regard to a complaint on the part of men on the Great Eastern Railway in connection with the fogging and flagging of trains. The Board of Trade wanted to know whether the complaint had been sent first by the men to the officials. His point was that it was a matter of indifference to the Board of Trade whether or not the individuals had made their complaint direct to the officials. There were too many instances of men having been dismissed or removed because their complaints had made them objectionable to officials. It was the business of the Board of Trade to ascertain whether the complaint of the Great Eastern Railway men was one that should be attended to by the Department, and whether the duties they had to perform were a source of danger to them. If so, the Board should see that the men were protected in their employment. He could bring scores of men to prove that they were penalised if they brought forward these matters. That was the reason why the men were afraid to make complaints. He had to-day received a letter from a railway servant, William Edward, stating that he had been accused of writing to the Board of Trade with respect to the condition of the engines on the Metropolitan Railway. This man totally denied that he had done so. He could prove by scores of similar cases that men were interfered with, not by the directors, managers, or chief officials of the companies, but by the subordinate officials. He urged that practical men should be appointed as sub-inspectors in order that accidents might be prevented. The right hon. Gentleman had got the money. It was not necessary to appeal to the Treasury at all. There were plenty of men to select from, and the right hon. Gentleman should not hesitate to appoint them at the earliest possible moment.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said the Railway Rates Select Committee, of which he moved and carried the appointment, to which the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had referred, made many recommendations, and he was satisfied that in revising the maximum rates they had commenced a practical reform. He was bound to say that he thought the railway companies had done something, at any rate, to make an improvement with regard both to rates and the conditions of traffic. If there was one thing more hopeful than another in connection with this, it was the tone of the whole debate. He could remember that only a few years ago an indictment in very strong terms was made on the points discussed, against the railways. To-day, although there were still some charges made, there was a disposition to acknowledge that, whether by legislation or administration, some marked improvement had been made. As one who at that time took an active part in relation to the question of railway rates he desired to say that much in the direction of reform had undoubtedly been effected. And by recognising the necessity for doing something in the direction desired the railway companies were acting in the interest ultimately of their own shareholders, a consideration which ought never to be overlooked, because he thought a policy of reasonableness and enterprise was most advantageous to the companies themselves. The tone of the debate indicated that some progress had been made, and it gave the best hope of effecting something in the same direction in the future. His hon. friend the Member for Somersetshire had referred to the feeling on the part of agriculturists. He desired to say for the commercial bodies that they were still by no means satisfied. There was no question more frequently raised in Chambers of Commerce than that of railway rates. It was a notorious fact that in certain cases rates were actually prohibitive, especially in relation to small consignments. If there was one cause of complaint more than another it was in regard to the preferences still given to foreign imports as compared with home produce. That was not peculiar to this country. It seemed to be a very general practice. He was in the United States recently, and he found that it existed there to a large extent, not only in favour of particular produce, but also in favour of certain ports to which the companies could control traffic. But complaints were sometimes made in regard to railway rates which on investigation showed that if the consignors knew a little more as to the actual rates and conditions, some improvement might be effected by themselves.

A great cause of complaint that might be made against railway companies was not in relation to rates so much as to the conditions of transport. He thought the conditions of consignment notes were, in many cases, highly oppressive. The differential rate between owners' risk and company's risk was frequently so great as to make the latter prohibitive. The consequence was that goods were necessarily consigned at the lower rate, if any profit was to be made at all. He knew particularly that in the furnishing trades this was a very general complaint to the London and other Chambers, and was very restrictive of that and other forms of industry. In that way the enactment of burdensome conditions was virtually a means of raising the railway rate and had frequently become oppressive. He was inclined to doubt whether spasmodic pressure, such as this Amendment, on railway companies in the end produced the advantages desired His hon. friend had said something about the great question of the relation of this House to railway companies in regard to railway rates and hours of labour. He admitted that they ought to see whether more possibly could not be done in this House in the interests of commerce; whether the House could not devise for itself the means of taking up practical commercial reforms. Let there be Commercial Committees and Agricultural Committees. But, after all, how seldom could the time be obtained at present to discuss great practical, industrial, commercial, or agricultural questions. It was the impotence of the House which made it difficult to deal with these matters, and that difficulty would continue until there was some new scheme for the allocation of public time. He was quite satisfied that the cumbrous and costly character of the appeal to the Railway and Canal Commission by the general public, and still more by the individual traders, was a great obstacle to any improvement. The Inter-State Traffic Commission in America was the hunting ground of the Trusts, and those connected with great organisations of that nature, both in attack and defence; but, like the Railway and Canal Commission here, it was very rare that the individual trader went there. The traders found that the cost was absolutely prohibitive. Until some means could be devised to enable the small trader to appeal to a small local tribunal, such as the county court, and so to afford him the means of procuring the fulfilment of the law, any great reform would be most difficult. He was satisfied that the cumbersome and costly character of the Railway and Canal Commission procedure was the great bulwark of the railway companies in preventing justice being done to the private trader.

He had had the honour of sitting on the Hours of Labour of Railway Servants Committee. He thought that what was done by that Committee, and the remonstrances made, had not been without effect, and that the Board of Trade had done something in the proper direction. He was glad to hear from the hon. Member for Derby that on the part of some of the classes of railway servants there was less complaint than at the time of the appointment of that Committee. At the same time, the number of accidents was still very large, though less than in America and on the Continent. It was not in the interest of the railway companies or their shareholders that there should be costly accidents, and it was not in the interest of the employees that they should be exposed to some risks which they had to run. He thought something should be done to check what was thus a real impediment to productive industry. The debate which had taken place that day would, he trusted, convince not only the public, but the railway companies and their shareholders that the objects sought to be attained by the railway employees must be a joint one with the companies themselves, and, so far from seeking to gain advantage from excessive hours of employment, with a consequent risk not only to the employees but to the travelling public, and with great penal results to the companies, the hours of labour might be further restricted by a little more care and regulation on the part of the few companies who were now the chief offenders. He knew the difficulties of legislation, but he hoped his right hon. friend would find time to refer to the Reports of the Committees on the subject. Some of the recommendations which had not been carried out, would, he was sure, commend themselves to the right hon. Gentleman, and he hoped the result would be beneficial to the men employed, to the companies themselves, and to the commerce of the country.

* MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said that he supported in the warmest manner the protest of the hon. Member for Derby, in regard to the non-appointment of further sub-inspectors. He knew that a great deal had been done under the Prevention of Accidents Acts in regard to some questions of safety—such as those which depended upon adequate spaces for work, the due lighting of shunting yards and sheds and railway stations. He recognised from the right hon. Gentleman's replies to questions that beneficial action had been taken in that direction; but any one who followed these matters must be well aware that the improvements introduced on those points alone were comparatively small and limited. What was wanted was a more thorough, more scientific, more practical investigation into the causes of all accidents which occurred from week to week, month to month, and year to year on the railways. As the congestion of the traffic increased, as the number of junctions and lines were multiplied, it was perfectly obvious that the sources of danger to the men at work also increased. He ventured to draw attention to the larger staff employed by the Home Office in regard to factory and mine inspection; and to express the opinion that the Board of Trade was absolutely undermanned for thorough inquiry into railway accidents and fatalities. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was in a position to reply that day, and if not he would put it down in the form of a Question on the Paper, but he wished to know the number of cases in which sub-inspectors or other officials of the Board of Trade had been sent down to attend inquests upon individual railway servants whose lives had been lost at their work. This was a very important matter, to which he had drawn the attention of the House before. Some years ago he put a question to the then President of the Board of Trade and elicited the fact that the powers under one of the Railway Acts by which a Coroner could ask for the attendance at inquests of an official of the Board of Trade were very rarely exercised. But the Board of Trade had the power, on its own initiative, to require that immediate telegraphic notice of any fatality on a railway should be given to the Board of Trade; and they could, if they chose, send down one of their inspectors to attend an inquest and to investigate and report to the Board of Trade the probable cause of the accident and the circumstances under which it took place. Experiments were to have been initiated under the Prevention of Accidents Act of 1900 in regard to couplings. He thought it was time that Parliament should have some statement from the Board of Trade as to the exact position in which this matter stood at the present time. They should also have some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that the matter would not be allowed to drag itself out from year to year, but that the energies of the Board of Trade would be applied to solve this problem in the decisive way in which it had been solved in the United States.

He himself always felt somewhat guilty when the Act in regard to railway hours of work was criticised in this House. That Act was substantially his own proposal, and carried out almost in his own words which he had inserted in Mr. Mundella's draft. A large responsibility rested on him for heaving left it to the railway men to make their complaints themselves to the Board of Trade. He was bound to say that the working of that Act was, in that respect, not effective. The last report of the Board of Trade dwelt on the fact that there had been an increase of representations from workmen from between twenty and thirty to something like 100 last year. Before that, with the exception of the first year or two after the passing of the Act, the number of complaints by workmen had been exceedingly limited indeed. The hon. Member for Derby had really touched the situation with a needle when he said that a complaint if it did not bring dismissal stood in the way of promotion. He acknowledged that Sir Francis Hopwood and other officials of the Board of Trade had always endeavoured to shield the interests of railway servants who made complaints. These were regarded as confidential; but hon. Members knew perfectly well that there were sources of information in regard to these complaints which superintendents and foremen carried to railway directors. Therefore there was the essential difficulty that, in regard to complaints, the Act had, it seemed to him, totally failed. He wished to refer to one point in the hours return which showed how faulty and inadequate the present administration of the Act was, and how faulty was the principle on which the Board of Trade were working in this matter. In looking over the return of instances during December, 1902, in which excessive hours had been worked of twelve hours and upwards on the principal railways, he found that whereas on the Taff Vale line, the North Eastern, the Midland, the Brighton, the Great Northern, the Great Eastern and the Great Western the percentage of goods guardsand goods engine drivers, brakesmen and firemen who worked excessive hours averaged from 80 per cent. to 97 per cent., on the North Western, which was highly to the honour of that line, the percentage of goods' guards during the same period who had worked excessive hours was only 13 and the percentage of goods engine drivers was only 22·46. Everyone knew that the North Western had to deal with mineral traffic just as much as the other great lines, and had similar difficulties with regard to fog and other matters. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to take into consideration the enormous discrepancy which existed between the North Western and the other great lines, and he thought that the Board of Trade ought to exercise its powers to the full in order to bring about the same wholesome results on the other lines. The speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington opened up various points which he would not enter on, but, with regard to railway rates, he wished to support in the very strongest way one point in the hon. Gentleman's speech, and that was the impracticability, so long as the present *régime* remained, of small traders and small agriculturists or agricultural societies having any chance whatever against the great railway companies on the question of rates. That was where an imperative reform, either legislative oradministrative, was needed.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he thought the Board of Trade as such, had no particular reason to be dissatisfied with the debate. Most of the criticisms were directed, not against the Board of Trade, or the administration of the Board of Trade, but against the railway companies. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Somerset, who initiated the debate, complained that the rates for agricultural produce were not such as to encourage agriculturists in the business which they carried on. The hon. Gentleman compared the action of the Board of Trade in this matter with the action of his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and said that his right hon. friend had always called attention to the subject whenever he could, and had promised to bring the question before the Board of Trade. The hon. Gentleman would perhaps be glad to hear that, as a matter of fact, his right hon. friend had not so far brought any case of excessive railway rates before the Board of Trade. His right hon. friend might be engaged in collecting such cases, but up to the present the Board of Trade had not received from his right hon. friend any complaints as to excessive rates for agricultural produce. He thought the hon. Gentleman, and also to a certain extent the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Islington, mistook the duty of the Board of Trade in this matter. It was not the duty of the Board of Trade to consider the various rates charged by the various railway companies, and to make remonstrances. Such a duty as that was not imposed on the Board of Trade by Statute, or in any other way. What surprised him, however, was that in the debate no reference was made to the Clause in the Act of 1888, under which traders or agriculturists or others who were aggrieved were at liberty to bring their case before the Board of Trade, and the Board of Trade was thereupon empowered to make representations to the railway company concerned.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that that had been done without result.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he was not inclined to agree with the hon. Gentleman. There were complaints made in 1896, and a conference followed which resulted in the railway rates complained of being reduced. The hon. Member for South Somerset yesterday moved the rejection, though he did not persist in his Motion, of an omnibus Bill promoted by the Great Western Railway Company, the ostensible reason being that the rates for milk charged by that railway company were higher than they ought to be. So far as he was aware, since the conference to which he had referred, there had been no complaints made to the Board of Trade by farmers or milk dealers under the Act of 1888; and yet the hon. Gentleman complained that the Board of Trade not only did not use the powers they possessed, but had not used powers they did not possess. Before making his complaint, it would have been more reasonable on the part of the hon. Gentleman, and those he represented, to have made representations to the Board of Trade under Section 31, of the Act of 1888. Until the Board of Trade had been asked to put into force the powers they possessed, surely they could not be blamed for not putting into force powers they did not possess. With reference to the questions raised by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division, the complaints again were not so much against the Board of Trade as against the railway companies. The hon. Gentleman did indeed complain that the information supplied by the Board of Trade was not supplied at an earlier date. They did their best in the matter, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman that there was no intentional delay in the preparation of the Returns. He did not think there was really any case for charging the Board of Trade with taking more time than was reasonable and necessary for the preparation of the Returns.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS said that did not represent what he stated. What he said was that Committee of Supply being opened they were asked to criticise the right hon. Gentleman's Department, although none of the figures with reference to railway accidents had been laid before hon. Members until two o'clock that afternoon. Any commercial concern would have prepared the tables much earlier. His complaint was not against the right hon. Gentleman personally. The Board of Trade sinned just as the Home Office and the other great Departments sinned. But the House of Commons ought to have the figures with reference to these Acts before they were asked to discuss the administration of the Board of Trade.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said if he understood the hon. Gentleman correctly, no Estimates at all were to be taken until all the Returns bearing on them had been presented.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS said the hon. Gentleman should not misrepresent him. He did not say that. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that practically Supply was not opened much before Easter, as up to the 31st of March they were discussing Supplementary

Estimates. He never said that no Vote should be taken before all the figures had been presented to the House.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he was sorry if he had misrepresented the hon. Gentleman. It was quite contrary to his intention. The Return to which the hon. Gentleman referred was a Return of accidents and casualties. It was not a Blue-book, but was a Return of the proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Railway Accidents Act. If the hon. Gentleman thought the Return which furnished him with facts and figures was too late, he was very sorry that it had not been issued earlier. The figures were somewhat numerous, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman that no time was lost in preparing the Return and laying it on the Table of the House. The number of railway accidents which occurred during the year 1902 was 435. No doubt that was a very large number; but he ventured to say that no country in the world, having regard to the proportion of railway servants employed, and to the train mileage, could show such a satisfactory record. He was quite certain that in America it would be absolutely impossible to show anything like such a satisfactory result. Not only that, but he might point out that there had been a very considerable improvement of late years. If they took the year 1893, the total number of fatal accidents was 446, and the number of servants employed was 381,000, and the train mileage run—passenger trains—was 177,000,000. In 1902 the fatal accidents were 435, and the number of persons employed 575,000. That showed a very marked improvement; and as to the train mileage, he believed that that would show a great improvement also, though he had not got the exact figures up to date. However, the train mileage for 1901 would be sufficient to show the position; whereas in 1893 the train mileage as to passenger trains was 177,000,000, and goods trains 141,000,000, in 1901 the mileage of passenger trains was 224,000,000, and goods trains 173,000,000. He thought it would be admitted that within the last ten years or so a very marked improvement indeed had taken place, and the number of accidents had been greatly reduced. Next, as to the Railway Accidents Act, the hon. Member had said frankly enough that the complaints which had been made were directed against the railway companies rather than against the Board of Trade; but while there might have been some delay when he first came to the Board of Trade, he might venture to say any delay that had occurred after about the first two months from his taking office had not been due to the Board of Trade. The hon. Member for Derby would bear him out in saying that the Board of Trade had done everything it could to draw up rules, and get them passed as rapidly as possible. It was true that the railway companies had made full use of their opportunities under the Act, but he could not see that they could be blamed for seeing that their interests were safeguarded, though he doubted whether they would be the gainers by the appeal they had made to the Royal Commission. He did not blame them for appealing, but he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the Board of Trade had done what it could to secure a satisfactory set of rules being carried out. The hon. Member for Rushcliffe had asked a question as to whether the companies had appealed in respect of Rule 1. The answer was in the affirmative. A considerable number of companies had appealed, and until the appeal was disposed of it would be impossible to bring that Rule into force.

He thought that the hon. Member for Derby really had not much to complain of in regard to the action of the Board of Trade. The hon. Member said that the Returns should be surprise Returns; but, while he admitted that the Returns wer enot so satisfactory as they could wish, still they showed a distinct improvement. That improvement was not sufficient to justify them in taking no further steps, but with regard to a surprise Return he would remind the hon. Member that in order to get a fair Return, as the month of December had been taken for the Return of 1901, it was necessary that the same month should be taken for 1902. As to the statement that Returns of a bogus character were made, he had no official knowledge of that; but if the hon. Member was in possession of information to that effect he should be very glad if he would communicate with him. With all due respect he could not accept statements made in that House as conclusive without evidence on which he could go. As to additional sub-inspectors, the hon. Member for Derby had pointed out that the Board of Trade had taken money for two additional sub-inspectors, but those inspectors had not yet been appointed. The money had been taken because experience might show that they ought to be appointed, and if necessity was shown he should not hesitate to appoint them. For the express purpose of dealing with the work in connection with the administration of the Railways Accidents Act two assistant inspectors had been appointed, but no additional sub-inspectors had been appointed since 1893 or thereabouts. He had before him a list of the inquiries which had been made by sub-inspectors, and he found that from 1895 to 1902 the number of inquiries sub-inspectors carried out had been about 300. In the year 1901, 191 inquiries were made by assistant inspectors, and in 1902 the number was 240. The hon. Member asked the Board of Trade to adopt a system which had never yet been adopted by it. He asked it to adapt the factory system of inspection, as administered by the Home Office, to railways. There was nothing in the Act dealing with railway administration, and there was nothing in that system to suggest to the Board of Trade that it should adopt it. To inquire whether or not the rules were being carried out as the hon. Member suggested would require an army of inspectors. So far from two additional sub-inspectors being able to do the work, he doubted whether forty or fifty would be sufficient. In any case he could not admit that any Act yet passed had placed, or had intended to place, on the Board of Trade the duty of carrying out any system of inspection such as obtained under the Home Office.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER pointed out that if there was any weakness in the powers of the Board of Trade the only people who could introduce legislation to remedy the defect were the Board of Trade themselves.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that was an entirely different matter. Questions of legislation could not be discussed on the Estimates, but if at a proper time proposals of that sort were brought forward he would be prepared to state his reasons for thinking that any such change would be undesirable. Then the hon. Member for Derby had said that when complaints had been made, the Board of Trade, instead of inquiring into those complaints, had asked that representations should be made to the employer. He did not know the case to which the hon. Member referred, but it did not seem altogether unreasonable for the Board to suggest that in the first instance the complaint might have been made to the employer. He would, however, make inquiries into the particular case to which the hon. Member alluded. The complaints of the hon. Member for South Islington, who recognised that in regard to the matters raised in the discussion there had been a considerable improvement during the last ten years, were against the railway companies rather than against the Board of Trade. If the traders had any complaints with which the Board of Trade could deal under Section 31, let them make them. Until they did so, the Board were really not in a position to approach the railway companies. He appealed to all who had communicated their grievances to the Board of Trade to say whether the Department, when the complaints were reasonable, had not always shown itself ready to approach the railway companies, and, so far as they could by conciliatory action—they had no compulsory powers—attempt to procure the alterations desired. The proper plan for those interested to adopt, was to form an association for joint action. It was not the business of the Board of Trade to introduce a Bill giving the Board of Agriculture the powers possessed by the Agricultural Board of Ireland. In reply to the hon. Member for East Northampton, he could not say in how many cases coroners had asked for the presence at inquests of officials of the Board of Trade, but if the hon. Member would put down a Question he had no doubt he would be able to give him the information as to whether the Board would be prepared to send down officials, whether asked for by the coroners or not; he had no reason to suppose that the facilities possessed by coroners in that respect were insufficient. He had never been able to accept the principle of the Bill in which the hon. Member was interested, by which the presence of officials of the Board of Trade at such inquests would be made compulsory, but he could not on the present occasion explain his reasons.

Mr. CHANNING asked whether the right hon. Gentleman, during his administration, had of his own initiative sent officers to attend any of these inquests.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said that, so far as he was aware, it had not been done, but he was certain that if any such request had been made by a coroner it had never been refused. The Board had not yet exercised its powers under the Prevention of Accidents Act to make experiments with respect to couplings, nor did he think it desirable that they should do so. A large fortune undoubtedly awaited the inventor of a really satisfactory form of automatic coupling, and a great number of ingenious men were at present engaged in attempting to solve the problem. The railway companies themselves from time to time were making experiments to see how far the inventions brought before them were satisfactory, and at many of those experiments the railway inspectors of the Board of Trade had been present. Further than that he did not think it desirable for the Board at present to go. He did not say it might not ultimately be expedient for the Board to utilise their power under the Act, but he thought that far more satisfactory results were likely to accrue from private enterprise in this matter than from any action a Government Department could possibly take.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) did not agree that the majority of the criticisms and complaints which had been made were rather against the railway companies than the Board of Trade. He thought the supervision and control of the Board over the companies might in many cases have been more energetically exercised for the protection of life and limb, and it was no answer for the right hon. Gentleman to play off America against Great Britain in the matter of railway management. In no country in the world could railway management, from the point of view of the safety of passengers and employees, possibly be worse than in the United States. Public opinion had not the same force in America as in England, and trusts and syndicates had not yet acquired here the influence they were able to exercise over the States and Federal legislatures of America. If railway companies attempted to do in England what they did in America the Board of Trade would be compelled by public opinion to resist them to a greater extent than was possible in America. America was the last place outside this country that he should select to be the guide, philosopher, and friend of industry capital, or commerce for this country. In matters like railways the country was relatively new, and public opinion did not operate in America as it did in this country, and to the credit of the House of Commons be it said, they had greater power over British railway companies than there was in America. The President of the Board of Trade must remember that in automatic couplings public opinion in America had compelled the arbitrary railway companies to do more to prevent accidents to life and limb than during the past three or four years the President of the Board of Trade had been able to extract from the railway companies in this country. It was to the credit of the American legislature and the men that, thanks to the introduction of automatic couplings, the railway companies in America had reduced accidents 20 to 50 per cent. two years after the automatic couplings were adopted. Judged by his own comparison the right hon. Gentleman was not up-to-date in this matter, and his administration with regard to automatic couplings for the prevention of accidents was not so good as it was in America. The right hon. Gentleman said the Board of Trade had no legal power to act to the extent to which had been assumed. But was that so? The Act of 1900 was not an Act to enable the Board of Trade to inquire into accidents after somebody had been killed or to give them facilities to shut the stable door when the horse had been stolen. The title of the Act itself implied a duty and asserted an obligation, and it was called "the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900." The second Sub-section of the first Clause stated that—

> "Where the Board of Trade consider that avoidable danger to persons employed on any railway arises from any operation of railway service,"

then they shall act. If hon. Members went further on in the Act they would find that Clause 13, provided that—

> "The powers of the Board of Trade for the inspection of railways shall include power to inspect any railway for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is any ground for proceeding under this Act."

What Act? The Act referred to was the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900 Clause 15, Subsection 3 further provided that—

> "It shall be the duty of every railway company to give all reasonable facilities for conducting any experiments made by the Board of Trade for the purpose of this Act."

His complaint was that under Subsection 3 of Clause 15, the Board of Trade had not made the necessary experiments, not only with regard to automatic couplings, but with regard to other things. They had not taken the powers they should have done, and had not carried out either in the letter or spirit what the Act placed upon them. All he asked the right hon. Gentleman to do was to read Clause 1, Sub-section 2, with Clause 13, and it would be seen that all through it was asserted that the Board of Trade had the power to experiment and make representations which they had not done to the extent they ought to have done. He was not irritated and out of temper, but he wished to protest against the hon. Member for Derby being asked to carry out and be practically the medium, not to say the authorised or unauthorised spy, for the Board of Trade, to do work for the railway companies that the sub-inspectors should do under the authority and responsibility of the State. It was not the business of trade union officials, or of Members of Parliament either, to ferret out from railway employees, or from dismissed or existing railway servants, certain defects or *lâches*, but it was the business of the Board of Trade inspectors, with the full responsibility of their duties, to make reasonable inquiries, and upon those inquiries to make reports both to railway companies and the Board of Trade.

The next point raised by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division was a reasonable complaint that the Returns for 1902 might have been presented sooner, and he personally shared that view. If the Returns which ought to have been presented to the House for the year ending 1902 had been before them, the President of the Board of Trade would have been able to institute comparisons favourable to his Department. Looking at what was called the dummy Return which had been issued, he found that there were seventy-nine fewer persons killed this year as compared with last year, and no less than seventy-five fewer people had been injured during the same period. If they had been able to compare last year's figures with figures for this year, some of the criticism to which the Board of Trade had been very properly subjected might have been removed or mitigated both in quality and quantity. He thought that three-and-a-half months was too long a period for this particular Return to take for preparation, and he trusted that in future years, before the Estimates were discussed after Easter, they would have this particular Return to guide Members of Parliament in forming proper opinions upon this question.

The Board of Trade seem to view with horror and almost with indignation the suggestion that inspection should be carried out on the railways as in the factories. He saw no reason why this should not be done. After all the railway field of industry was probably the most dangerous of all industries. Let him give a practical point. Take the great railway works at Crewe. Of the men employed there in shops under the Home Office, one in 3,000 was killed every year, but in regard to shunters one in 264 was killed every year, and one in seventeen injured.

> "For forms of government let fools contest;
> Whate'er is best administered is best."

When they had in any industry one in 264 killed and one in seventeen injured as against one in 3,000 killed when the workshops were properly inspected by the Home Office, it did seem to him there were reasonable grounds for asking for inspection. Why did he ask for inspection of railways? Apart from the facts he had already mentioned, he would give a simpler, and in some respects a better example. When the Home Office inspector went into a chemical works, or a large factory or shipyard, or an engineering works to have a look round, he did not go in a fussy, impudent, and obtrusive way, or like an official jack-in-the-box, asking people to carry out his suggestions at once. The inspector invariably took a look round, accompanied by a member of the firm, and if he saw a piece of gear or machinery that might be better protected, with his experience and knowledge, not of one particular form of works but of many forms, he took the best yard or the best factory and workshop as a standard to work up to, he would probably say to that particular firm, "Now, Mr. Brown, don't you think that cogwheel might have a guard round it, and that the expenditure of a few shillings here and there would probably prevent you having to pay £300 compensation to the widow of a man that 5s., perhaps, would prevent from being killed?" The result would be that in this way an enormous amount of money might be saved to employers, and a great number of men be prevented from being killed or seriously injured. When Colonel Yorke, or some of his colleagues, were instructed by their duty, or by the President of the Board of Trade, to go down and inquire into some railway accident, what happened? Colonel Yorke, or some other inspector, would go down to the scene of the accident, and in a fair, and impartial, and able manner make reports upon it. The inspector might report that engine-driver So-and so ought to have done this, or that guard So-and-so ought to have done the other, or he might report that the railway company might have done this, or that the regulation under which they worked was defective on that particular day and ought to be improved. He wanted Colonel Yorke to go down the day before the accident came off, and he wished him to be wise before the event and not after, as he invariably was. He did not believe in too many inspectors. He believed that a bureaucratic governed State was a badly governed State.

He was in favour of stiff penalties and the appointment of well-paid and efficient officials. If a railway company did not do what was reasonable, swingeing penalties should be imposed. They could not get the desired condition of things to prevail, in connection with a service of over 600,000 men, unless they had a small staff of peripatetic sub-inspectors whose duty it would be to prevent accidents by going to the foremen of shunting yards, and giving reasonable notice of what should be done in the light of the best possible experience. He wanted to say a word as to the justice of the criticism of his hon. friend the Member for Derby. The President of the Board of Trade had said that railway accidents had diminished considerably in recent years. Well, of course they had. What was the House of Commons for, if it was not to insist upon reasonable precautions being taken to stop the needless massacre of men, and the injuries which too frequently occurred on railways? There had been an improvement, and it was because of the increasing desire on the part of the more efficient railway managers to improve their railways for passengers and workmen, and in so far as railway managers were working in that direction they were grateful to them. But he should like to point out that enormous though the improvement might have been in some grades of labour from the point of view of safety, it was not comparable with the increased safety that the railway managers had been able to give to passengers. He would just quote one figure. In the year 1901, the return for which was the last available, there was only one out of 71,000,000 passengers killed on our railways. The President of the Board of Trade would be glad to know that that was about 20 times better than in America. On the other hand there was one in 1,173 men killed on the railways.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member must be wrong.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he got the statement in the right hon. Gentleman's own report. Hon. Members might challenge his opinions, but he would try to induce everybody in the House to have some regard for his facts. He would give a better fact. One in 2,500,000 passengers was injured, but one in 137 of the men was injured. An accident on the railway was something more serious than having a tooth taken out by a West-End dentist. Out of every 240 shunters one was killed, and out of every seventeen one was injured. He did not wish to exaggerate, but the statistics he had quoted were taken from the Report of the Board of Trade. They proved that through the action of the House of Commons, enlightened public opinion, sympathetic newspapers, and successive Presidents of the Board of Trade, stimulated by reasonable criticism in this House, there had been an enormous improvement in the safety of passengers and of railway men, but that was no reason why they should stand still. It was no answer for them to be told that we did these things better than in America. Of course we did. Industrially, America was hell with the lid off. [Laughter.] The President of the Board of Trade might smile, but he would give one illustration. He was speaking recently to one of the greatest captains of industry in this country—a gentleman who held the same political views as the President of the Board of Trade, a strong individualist who was opposed to trades unionism, and who resented anything in the nature of Socialist legislation. He employed between 5,000 and 6,000 men. He said to this gentleman, "Well, you have been to Pittsburg, sir?" The gentleman replied that he had, and that he had seen 12,000 men there but that he did not see a grey head or a smile. That was a type of industry which they had not in this country, and it would not be to their credit if they had. He asked the President of the Board of Trade not to go to the worst country in the world for comparisons with the old country. He could only say that in this matter Britain led the way. One of the reasons why there were fewer cases of lead poisoning, why mine accidents had fallen and why passengers and workmen on railways were safer now than they were a few years ago was because in this House, without fear or favour on either side, the representatives of masters and men pursued the line of levelling industry up and making the British standard the best they knew of. It was not so good as it might be, and it was in order to assist in making it better that he supported his hon. friend the Member for Derby.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said it was satisfactory to hear that of late there had been considerable improvement in the matter of accidents on railways, and they all hoped that that improvement would still continue. He wished to go back for a moment to another subject, and to say a word on behalf of the agricultural traders with regard to railway rates. They needed assistance from the Government more than any others. He was sorry that the Minister for Agriculture had not been present during the debate. He wished in the first place to refer to one aspect of the agricultural question which had hitherto more or less escaped attention. The agricultural trader in a great number of instances was very differently situated from the trader in the large towns. In the case of foreign goods imported into this country, the town trader had the advantage in nearly all cases of competitive rates, but in the case of the farmer in the agricultural districts, it was very common for him to have only a single line with absolutely no competition whatever. His right hon. friend had said that if the agriculturist suffered from unfair rates he ought to form associations for the purpose of making complaints and bringing them before the notice of the Board of Trade. It was easy for people living in towns to form associations for their own protection, but the position of farmers was very different. They were busy men living widely scattered, and it was extremely difficult for them to find time to form associations, even though they suffered from unfair treatment with regard to railway rates. His right hon. friend had also stated that the Board of Agriculture looked after the interests of the agriculturists, and that as a matter of fact, the Minister for Agriculture had never brought forward a single case and submitted it to the Board of Trade, urging them to take action. He must leave it to the right hon. Gentleman to settle that point with the Minister of Agriculture—but for his part he desired to say that he gladly recognised the extreme activity of the present Minister for Agriculture, and his constant efforts on behalf of that interest. But what he wanted to point out was that if complaints were made on behalf of the agricultural interests in regard to railway rates, these complaints should not be bandied about from one Department to another; for if that was so, he could only say that it seemed to him the unfortunate farmer was extremely likely, between these two stools, to fall to the ground. Over and over again during the last dozen years representations had been made to the Government, by deputation and otherwise, on the question of the unfair railway rates of which agricultural traders complained. These complaints had been invariably accepted not only by this but by other Governments, and assurances had been given that where these things were shown to prevail the agriculturists should have better treatment in the future. He hoped that the Committee would have a more satisfactory answer from the President of the Board of Trade than had yet been received. He earnestly pressed on his right hon. friend that this was a most serious question, and if what had been stated was the only reply they were to have it would be gravely resented, not only by those hon. Members who represented agriculturists in this House, but also by agriculturists in all parts of the country.

*MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to a danger which the Board of Trade had the power to mitigate. He referred to the lack of communication between light-ships and the shore. This was no academic matter, because the loss of life round our coasts was continuous. The National Lifeboat Institution did annually save hundreds of lives, but still a great many were lost; and the number lost or saved frequently depended largely on the quickness with which communication could be made between the wrecks and light-ships, and between the light-ships and the shore. It would be in the recollection of the Committee that many years ago a Royal Commission was appointed to consider this matter, and that that Royal Commission recommended that all parts of the coast should be linked up by telephones, and that the light-vessels should be linked up with the shore. Most of these recommendations had been carried out, but it had been proved that the cables between light-ships and the shore were liable to be interrupted in bad weather. During the last two and a quarter years there had been forty-eight cases of interruption to communication in stormy weather, in the case of cables between light-vessels and the shore. These interruptions had varied in length of time from a few weeks to some months, and during that period, when ships were grounded on, say, the Goodwin Sands, many lives might be lost owing to the absence of communication. It might be said that the difficulties of communication by cable were inherent, and that nothing could be done; but, in point of fact, they knew that this was one of the cases where wireless telegraphy could do all that was required; and therefore he had ventured to bring the matter before the Committee. Of all the extraordinary cases of neglect of taking precautions in a matter involving life and death, this was the most extraordinary. In the month of July, 1900, nearly three years ago, a question was asked by the hon. Baronet the Member for Cambridge on this very subject, and the reply of the President of the Board of Trade was that the matter was being considered. It had been pointed out by the hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth that certain light-vessels off the German coast were already in communication with the shore by means of wireless telegraphy, and that the system was in working order. The reply of the representative of the Board of Trade was that that indeed was the case, that the system was working well, and a hope was expressed that in a short time there would communication established between our light-ships and the shore. From that time till now questions had been asked in the House, some by himself and some by other hon. Members, as to the time when that communication would be made, but the answer had always been that the matter was under consideration. It did seem to him that the time had come now when some kind of decision should be come to on the matter. For the sake of the right hon. Gentleman, the head of the Department himself, it would be wise that he should come to some decision before the next winter season. If there were a wreck on Goodwin Sands at night, and if the notification of the wreck could not be conveyed to the shore, and if the wrong lifeboat were despatched to the wreck, there would be great loss of life, and the most bitter obloquy would be thrown on all concerned, and, above all, on the right hon. Gentleman. It seemed to him that this matter was supremely simple, since it had been done by Germany three years ago, and that it could be done by ourselves.

He knew that there were difficulties in the way in negotiating with various persons concerned—with Signor Marconi, with the Admiralty, and with the Post Office; but he could not conceive for a moment that arrangements could not be made with Signor Marconi or the other holders of patents, without prejudice to other rights, by which, for the purpose of saving life, communication could be made between the light-ships and the shore. Of his own knowledge he was aware that such arrangements could be made, and he most earnestly urged on the right hon. Gentleman to come to an agreement without delay. It might be thought that the possibilities of shipwreck were remote, but anyone who studied the wreck-charts must know that the wrecks on the East and North Goodwins were extremely numerous—amounting to many tens, in the course of a year. Within this very month and the month preceding they had been within an ace of a terrible disaster to a vessel carrying a large number of passengers, solely owing to the absence of wireless telegraphic communication with the shore. This vessel was observed by the light-ship, but there was on board the light-ship no means of communication with the shore. Then there was the case of the "Douvre-Calais" boat with 478 passengers on board on 2nd March last, which got into difficulty on account of a breakdown of machinery in a gale of wind. Had not that ship been fitted up with wireless telegraphic apparatus, it was extremely probable that, if she had been wrecked, everyone on board would have been drowned. It must be evident to the Committee that such a fortunate accident could not always be relied on, seeing that the number of vessels so fitted up with wireless telegraphic apparatus was necessarily very small. There was the case of another vessel this very month in which a large number of passengers and sailors were in jeopardy of their lives for want of communication between light-ship and shore. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that, seeing we were the foremost maritime nation in the world, that the tonnage of our ships was immeasurably greater than that of any other nation with shorter coast lines and fewer difficulties in establishing this wireless communication; seeing that repeated pledges had been given by the President of the Board of Trade that this matter should be dealt with; and seeing further that the matter was supremely simple — the whole thing could be done in a month—that the right hon. Gentleman should give some assurance to the Committee that something should be done in the matter before the next winter set in.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he did not wish to conceal from himself that this was an attack on the salary of the President of the Board of Trade. He should have expected that after the long but very soothing speech the right hon. Gentleman had delivered, all the attacks seemed to come to an end. His language was conciliatory, his manner was ineffable, his arguments addressed to the subjects he was dealing with seemed conclusive. But it was the misfortune of the President of the Board of Trade that his good deeds or misdeeds extended over the whole habitable earth, from the Falkland Islands to the most distant regions. There was scarcely a sphere of modern life which his Department did not touch. He would say nothing of the ability of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman was as successful in the Board of Trade as he had been in Ireland; and he was quite sure that whatever position the right hon. Gentleman occupied he would fill with distinction and credit—whether in a Chair of Poetry or Metaphysics on the banks of the Isis, or in a Bath chair on the shores of Mentone. He sympathised with the appeal made by his hon. and gallant friend behind him to the President of the Board of Trade, but he would remind him that in most cases where accidents occurred within view of a light-ship, it was possible to communicate with the shore by firing signal guns. It was only in the case of very distant light-ships where wireless telegraphic communication would be useful.

*MAJOR J. E. B. SEELY said that the whole contention of the National Lifeboat Institution was that when gun signals were given, the wrong lifeboat that is, the lifeboat with wind and tide against her often endeavoured to proceed to the rescue.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that that might sometimes be the case, but not often. No doubt they were very much behind in all Government Departments. He had been informed by the representative of the Kingdom of Siam that for ten years they had been using the electric light in Bangkok ten years before it was first introduced into London and the same thing was true, no doubt, in regard to wireless telegraphic communication. There were many grievances against the Board of Trade, but his chief grievance was their diplomatic action in regard to the Sugar Convention. No doubt there was an excuse for the right hon. Gentleman there, because the diplomatic duties had been put upon him by the Foreign Office, for which the Board of Trade was not equipped, and diplomatic misconceptions and mistakes had necessarily been made. However, other opportunities would arise for discussing that question and he would not dwell on it now. His present argument was that the right hon. Gentleman ought, in justice, to have some amount of his salary taken away on account of his Ministerial misdeeds in regard to what was known as the Morgan Shipping Trust. The right hon. Gentleman had not only committed misdeeds in his executive action, but he violated the duty imposed on him under the Merchant Shipping Act. As the Committee was aware, nearly a year ago negotiations were begun between Mr. Pierpont Morgan and His Majesty's Government, in order to come to some agreement with regard to a large number of British ships sold to Mr. Morgan made by private persons. Then Mr. Pierpont Morgan made some agreement with the Board of Trade not yet disclosed. You might train a poodle to perform many interesting tricks well fitted to amuse a select company, such as to sit up and beg for sugar, or to fetch and carry—but you could not train him to draw a badger; and when an agreement was arrived at between Mr. Pierpont Morgan and the right hon. Gentleman, it was not for him to say who played the part of the poodle and who the part of the badger. His first complaint was that he had been entirely unable to obtain any information on the matter. He asked for information month after month; month after month it was promised to him, and month after month he failed to get it. The right hon. Gentleman gave him almost an undertaking that he should have the information before Easter; but Easter had come and gone, and still he had not had it. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman said that he thought he was in a position to undertake that the agreement would be ready for execution by Easter, and he promised that, on its execution, it would be laid on the Table of the House. He did not complain of the small space of time that had elapsed since Easter, but of the great length of time that had elapsed since the first inception of the agreement, and of the continued lack of information regarding it.

That was his first complaint; but he had a much more serious complaint than that. Between 900,000 and 1,000,000 tons of English shipping had been sold to foreigners, and had become their property, and now in consequence of the neglect of the right hon. Gentleman to perform the duties imposed on him by Statute, he was allowing these foreign ships to still carry the British flag and to retain their British register, with the result that great mischief was being done to the British proprietors of really British ships. When he asked the right hon. Gentleman in April of last year whether when a British ship was sold to a foreign company having its principal business abroad it ceased to be British and was disentitled to a British register, the right hon. Gentleman replied that if such a sale took place the vessel would lose its British register. He was then satisfied with that; but since then, the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have altered his opinion. On the 23rd of March the right hon. Gentleman said that the arrangement with Mr. Pierpoint Morgan did not involve the transfer of ships, but the transfer of shares in British companies. But under the agreement, as far as he knew of it, with that transfer of the shares went the transfer of absolute dominion over the property of the ships, with the right to use, abuse, or destroy that property. Every element of property was transferred to and acquired by the American Corporation represented by Mr. Pierpont Morgan and now known as the International Mercantile Marine Company. That being so, it was impossible to maintain that these vessels had not ceased to be British ships. It was no use telling him that by some hocus pocus the ships were represented by the shares alone, and that these were by some legal fiction still the property of British companies subject to under the direction of, and the servants of Mr. Pierpont Morgan's Corporation. If the real elementary dominion over the ships had passed, as undoubtedly it had, to the American corporation, having its principal place of business in America, these vessels ceased to be the property of British subjects in every respect. The words of the Act were as clear as possible, and there were a whole series of penalties against the assumption of British nationality or the use of the British flag by foreign vessels, such as he claimed these vessels were. The person to enforce such penalties was the right hon. Gentleman, and under the Act he was the person who was to authorise prosecutions and who was to approve every form of registry. Without the right hon. Gentleman, even the name of a ship could not be changed, much less could her nationality be changed. He maintained that the right hon. Gentleman was acting contrary to his duty in allowing these ships to retain the British flag and British nationality when they had ceased to be British ships. Under the Act, if a child were born on board a British ship it was registered as a British subject but if on a foreign ship it was not so; and the right hon. Gentleman by continuing to allow vessels which were not British to fly the British flag was creating British babies who were not British subjects at all. That was a distinctly improper thing for the President of the Board of Trade to do.

It might, perhaps, be thought that this was a mere academic question. That was not so. It was a very material question which seriously affected British shipowners, because of the difference between having a British register and an American register, even if these ships could get an American register, which he very much doubted. His own opinion was that they were not entitled to any flag at all; and that in some respects they had the attributes of a pirate. These vessels, by retaining the British register and the British flag, were enabled to have an advantage in their trading as compared with what they would have if they had not possessed that flag; and he was informed by competent shipowners that that advantage amounted to 20 per cent. on the whole of their working expenses. Were they to cease to have a British register, to which he maintained they were not entitled, they would immediately be subjected to 20 per cent. additional expenditure. If that were so, and he had no doubt it was so, the result was that by the action, or rather want of action, of the right hon. Gentleman, which he was bound to take in defence of the purity of the British registry and the retention of the British flag to British ships, these vessels were now competing under false British colours with British shipowners, and they had an advantage of 20 per cent. in their expenditure, which they would not have if the right hon. Gentleman did his duty. Therefore, this was not an academic question, but a question of very serious importance to British shipowners, and they were entitled to know exactly where they stood. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that England claimed an income tax on money earned abroad when the controlling influence was in this country. The analogy was more than complete. The brains that controlled these ships were the brains of Mr. Pierpont Morgan and his associates. Even if there were subsidiary companies in this country, they had to obey Mr. Pierpont Morgan and his associates. The brains were in America; and just as England taxed money earned abroad when the brains were at home, he claimed, by the strictest analogy, that these vessels must be foreign vessels. He defied the right hon. Gentleman to quote the opinion of any law officer of the Crown contrary to what he had stated. The Act itself was as clear as an Act could be; but if the right hon. Gentleman had the opinion of any law officer of the Crown that his contention was wrong, and if it could be shown that these vessels were still in law British vessels although all the elements of property in them had passed to American owners, he would respectfully bow to such a high authority. But he did not believe that any law officer of the Crown would give such an opinion. He saw a highly qualified legal hon. Gentleman opposite, and perhaps he would tell the Committee whether ships *bonâ fide* owned in America could continue to be British ships. If he were right, then certainly the right hon. Gentleman had very seriously neglected his duty. Having in view the very serious consequences that must ensue, the fact that the right hon. Gentleman was allowing foreign vessels to enjoy British privileges would, he feared, cause the right hon. Gentleman to be known not as the President of the Board of Trade, but as the President of the Board for the Destruction of British Trade.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he wished to offer a suggestion to the President of the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well the importance of seeing things with his own eyes, and making inquiries on the spot. The right hon. Gentleman did that himself in Ireland when he was Chief Secretary, and he now asked him to visit the North of Scotland in order that he might inquire into the working of the Light Railways Act in that part of the country. The Act was not a success, because the people were unable to fall in with all the requirements of the Board of Trade. The Board ought to be more liberal in providing funds for the construction of light railways in the North of Scotland. As the right hon. Gentleman's efforts were so successful in Ireland, he hoped he would turn his attention to the Highlands of Scotland, and if he did he would have the thanks of the Highland people. There was only one railway company north of Inverness, and it was unable to give financial assistance for Light Railway Schemes; the landlord were unable to do so, and the people were too poor. Light Railways would be a great boon to the people and agriculture in the far north, and he hoped the President of the Board of Trade would consider the need of arranging for more favourable terms for Light Railways in the Highlands. He also desired to ask what progress, if any, had been made towards the adoption of a uniform code of railway by-laws. Another point upon which he would like some information was as to when the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways would replace their present mode of steam traction by electric traction. With regard to steam trawlers, he would suggest that more care should be taken to require steam trawlers to have their numbers on the funnel and other conspicuous part. The Board of Trade had power to enforce these regulations, and to impose penalties, but the small fine usually imposed is ineffective.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) said although he had a Motion on the Paper to reduce the Vote for the salary of the President of the Board of Trade, he held the opinion that the right hon. Gentleman was very much underpaid, and that the office of the President of the Board of Trade should be raised to as high a status as possible. He also thought the staff of the office of the Board of Trade was underpaid. Having regard to the state of our trade and commerce we should have the best administration of this Department that it was possible to get. It was evident that our commerce was not progressing as it should. Ports were being closed against us, and our commerce was being taken away by rival nations. That was shown by the fact that, whereas in the last ten years our commerce had only increased 16 per cent. that of America had increased 75 per cent.; and all other nations were increasing their commerce whilst ours was practically at a standstill. The Committee had been informed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture that he had not in the matter of rates had many glaring anomalies brought to his notice. He would like to give a few general facts which affected the agricultural community of Essex to such an extent that they could not compete with the foreign producer. Where men could bring their produce to market in their own carts they could do well on the land, but where they had to depend upon railways they could not compete owing to the through rates given to foreigners. Apples from Folkestone, for instance, cost 24s. a ton to bring to London, whilst apples from Normandy, through Folkestone, cost only 15s.

*THE CHAIRMAN asked how it was suggested that the President of the Board of Trade could alter that. Rates had to be altered by Act of Parliament, and that being so, they could not be discussed in the Estimates. The hon. Gentleman should bring in a Bill. The Committee was not sitting to-day for the purpose of considering legislation; they were sitting for the purpose of considering the administrative work of different Government Departments, and the hon. Member must confine himself to that point.

MR. SINCLAIR said it was manifest that a great grievance was felt throughout the country in consequence of the privileges conceded to foreigners, who could bring their produce to our markets at a cheaper rate than we could get them there. The Board of Trade Returns showed clearly that our own colonies were taking less from us than they did before; the neutral ports were gradually being closed against us, and our trade, instead of increasing, was diminishing. One of the most important factors in the administration of a country which depended upon commerce was that that trade should be administered on modern lines, so that we were able to compete with our rivals and that our traders could be told what to do to hold their own in our own markets. With regard to home affairs, although the right hon. Gentleman had been most sympathetic, and had done his best to amend the Patent Laws, still the fees for obtaining patents were too high, and the patents themselves did not give sufficient protection. A great deal might also be done to put into force our bankruptcy laws. Traders by becoming bankrupt became richer than they were before, and by trading under the names of their wives they got credit, and defrauded the public at large. Then again, he submitted that the restrictions and regulations of the Board of Trade with regard to shipping was unfair with regard to the British shipowner. Foreigners did not comply with the law with regard to the load line, for instance, which was strictly enforced against the British owner, and the same remark applied to the carriage of emigrants. It was grievous to see the whole trade and commerce of the country administered by a Board which had not the *status* of a first class Department, and the head of which consequently had not the assistance of officials of the same class as those in the higher Departments. He sincerely hoped that the inquiry which had been promised would soon be set on foot, so that it might be decided what functions should be exercised by the Board of Trade, and what by other Departments.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he did not altogether agree with the particular grievance in connection with the shipping combine to which the hon. Member for King's Lynn had referred. It was undoubtedly the case that when ships flew the British flag they were entitled in both foreign and home ports to many services on the part of the British Consulate and the British Government. What was still more serious, it might lead to a British Government being held responsible for the conduct of vessels flying the British flag, and certainly the British Government would be expected to demand and enforce amends for any wrongs perpetrated on the British flag. That was the condition of things which deserved serious attention, and to his mind it was a graver feature of what had taken place than that to which the hon. Member for King's Lynn had adverted. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had any power to prevent this——

MR. GIBSON BOWLES referred the hon. and learned Member to paragraphs 713 and 717 of the Merchant Shipping Act.

SIR ROBERT REID said he remembered the substance of the clauses in regard to the duties of the Board of Trade, and also of the clause prescribing the conditions under which vessels might be registered and fly the British flag. But since the Merchant Shipping Act was passed, great changes had taken place in the manner of holding British ships. They were owned in sixty-fourths, and the sixty-fourths used to be held by private owners. Now a large number of ships were held by companies, and often by single-ship companies. The domicile and the management of those companies was in this country, and he believed that on that ground income tax had to be paid on their profits. That being the state of things in the eyes of the law, those companies were British companies, and the consequence was that, although really in substance the whole interest resided abroad, yet under the Statute the ships were wholly owned by British owners, viz., by British corporations, and were therefore entitled to be registered as British ships. Probably the right hon. Gentleman had taken the opinion of the law officers; if so, they had probably said something to the effect he had just indicated. In that case the right hon. Gentleman could not be blamed, because he could not transcend the law of the country; that power was reserved for other distinguished Members of the Government. Under these circumstances he could not concur in censuring the right hon. Gentleman for not administering his Department properly. But he could not help thinking that the subject itself, though the evil at present might be so comparatively small as not to require legislative action, was a serious matter, and that if it was to go on to any extent the right hon. Gentleman would have to consider the propriety of initiating legislation.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT asked the right hon. Gentleman to take into consideration the desirability of increasing the grant for the expenses of the Advisory Committee of the Commercial Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade. Compared with foreign countries the Intelligence Department was on a scale altogether inadequate for the purposes it had in view, and the work of this Committee would be greatly restricted unless the Grant was increased. With regard to the Lighthouse Fund, assurances were given when the Act of 1897 was under discussion that the accumulation of that fund should be limited to £100,000. The fund already amounted to £345,000, and he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not think that was a tax on the shipping industry which might well be abated. Lastly, who was responsible for the action to be taken in connection with the St. Louis Exhibition? Had the right hon. Gentleman, as head of the Board of Trade, anything to do with this important matter? There had been a great deal of mystery about it, and the Committee ought to be informed who was responsible for dealing with a matter of the greatest commercial and of considerable political importance.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that his submission with reference to the Morgan Combine was that not a particle of the real essence of the property resided with the corporation in this country. The whole dominion, control, and rights over the property, the essence of the property itself, rested solely with the corporations abroad. It was on that ground alone that he claimed they were no longer British ships.

SIR ROBERT REID said he had tried to explain that in substance he agreed with that view, but although the shares in the company which owned the shipping, might belong to a foreign corporation, that did not constitute the foreign corporation the owner in the eye of the law. He thought it inconvenient and wrong, and that it might well be amended, but it was no use blinking the actual fact that in the view of the law the owner was a British corporation, and that therefore there was no violation of the statute.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that surely the real owner was the corporation which had dominion over the property.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said the question of wireless telegraphy was rendered difficult by the fact that the Government had no power over communications made from this country outside the three-mile limit. In Germany and France the position was otherwise, and consequently those countries were probably able to deal with the question more satisfactorily and conclusively than this country had been able to do. Here many difficult questions arose in connection with wireless telegraphy, and until those questions had been definitely settled by the various Departments concerned, such as the Admiralty and the Post Office, he could not undertake to carry out the wishes of his hon. friend—which was also his own wish—that the communication between lighthouses and the shore should in many cases be carried out by means of wireless telegraphy. He perfectly recognised the importance of that communication being established, and as far as his Department was concerned, he could assure the Committee that no effort would be wanting to secure the desired result as soon as possible. With regard to the criticisms passed on the Board of Trade by the hon. Member for King's Lynn in reference to the Morgan Combine, the Prime Minister had stated that when the agreement had been laid on the Table of the House, an opportunity would be afforded for discussing the whole subject. He therefore thought it would be very inexpedient to enter into the question at the present stage. With regard to the agreements connected with the shipping combine and the Cunard Company, both of them would be laid on the Table of the House, and when that had been done, an opportunity for discussion of the whole subject would be given to the House, as promised by the Prime Minister. He was sorry for the delay, but a question had arisen at the last moment which made it unavoidable. A very few days would elapse before they would be able to lay the Papers on the Table, and it would not be inexpedient to anticipate discussion now. The Government had, of course, received the opinion of the law officers before arriving at their conclusions, and the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite would have an opportunity of discussing the question in its legal as well as its political aspects. The hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty had asked a question in reference to granting more favourable terms to the promoters of light railways in the congested districts of Scotland. It appeared to him that legislation would be required to effect any change in that direction, and he thought that the inducement of the Treasury to offer more favourable terms to promoters of light railways in certain districts of Scotland was rather a matter for the Secretary for Scotland than for his Department. If the Secretary for Scotland was of opinion that exceptional terms should be offered for promoting light railways in Scotland, then he should make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Secretary for Scotland was in a better position to judge upon this matter than he was.

As to the by-laws, the Board of Trade had no power to require uniformity of by-laws among railways, although they had more than once suggested to railway companies that they should make their by-laws uniform. So far, those representations had not had the desired effect, but the Board of Trade would continue to press the matter upon the attention of the railway companies. The hon. Member had further asked whether he was in a position to say on what date electric traction on the Metropolitan Railway would be established. He was afraid that he was not in a position to answer that question, but if the hon. Member would put down a Question in the ordinary way, he would endeavour to obtain all the information he could. As to the trawlers, this was a question with which he was not so familiar, but he would see what the powers of the Board of Trade were, and ascertain what could be done in the direction of exercising them. With reference to the point raised by the hon. Member for

Romford, he should be very glad indeed to see the salaries of the Board of Trade staff raised. The hon. Member for South Islington had asked one or two questions. In the first place he had inquired as to an increase of the grant to the Advisory Committee of the Commercial Intelligence Department. The grant-in-aid to the Advisory Committee of the Commercial Intelligence Department was £1,000 a year, which accumulated when it was not all used in one year for subsequent use. As the hon. Member knew, they had sent Commissions to Siberia, Persia, and South Africa in connection with the Board of Trade. Although the Commissions to Siberia and Persia were to be paid out of the fund at the disposal of the Advisory Committee, his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had consented to defray the expenses of the Commission to South Africa out of a separate fund.

MR. DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby) asked whether anything was intended to be done to lessen the contributions of the shipping community in respect to the maintenance of lighthouses. He thought the Committee ought to know which Department was standing in the way of this reform being carried out.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that no Departments were standing in the way of this reform, for they were all anxious to do it. As regarded the lighthouses, he was of opinion, after a careful examination of the subject, that they would be able to make a substantial reduction in the contribution required from the shipping community. He denied that any Department was standing in the way of the connection of the lighthouses by wireless telegraphy.

MR. FITZROY (Northamptonshire, S.) asked whether no complaint had been received at the Board of Trade as to railway rates through the Board of Agriculture.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: So far as I am aware, no specific complaint has been forwarded to us by the Board of Agriculture.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (MR. HANBURY, Preston): My right hon. friend is no doubt perfectly right when he says that so far as he is aware no such communication has been received from the Board of Agriculture; but, as a matter of fact, to his Department have gone several complaints from the Board of Agriculture.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) drew attention to the great difference in freights to South Africa from this country and from the United States. The right hon. Gentleman had instituted some sort of inquiry with regard to the possibilities of British commerce in South Africa, with a view to obtaining information which would be useful to the manufacturers of this country. That was a very popular move, and he should like to ask how far that inquiry had gone. He wished to know whether they would have reports issued shortly, or would they have to wait for some considerable time. If such an inquiry was properly conducted, they ought to be able to get information of very great value to the manufacturers of this country as to the facilities for the development of business in South Africa. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would be performing a very useful public duty if he would endeavour to bring pressure to bear upon the large shipping rings to lower their freights in such a way as to give British manufacturers some sort of a chance of competing on fairer terms with their rivals in other countries. The right hon. Gentleman could do nothing which would be so popular as devoting his attention to this subject. Was the President of the Board of Trade aware of the enormous charges made by these shipping rings, which made it almost impossible for British manufacturers to have a chance? Was he aware of those facts, and was he able to hold out any hope that he would be able to get those charges reduced, so as to give British trade a fair chance so far as South Africa was concerned?

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he supported what had been said by his hon. friend the Member for Kirkcaldy with regard to British trade in South Africa. It was not, however, quite correct to say that the President of the Board of Trade had done nothing, for he had made a speech in Leeds a few months ago in which he spoke very strongly indeed against the action of this shipping "combine," which was having such a bad effect upon British trade in South Africa. That speech was very acceptable as far as it went, for it showed that the right hon. Gentleman desired to do something, if he could, to break down this monopoly which was having such an injurious effect on British trade with the new colonies. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he had followed up that speech by action of any kind. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had been able to persuade the War Office and the Colonial Office, which were likely to be shipping large quantities of goods at the expense of the British taxpayer, that it was in the interest of British trade that they should decline to support a monopoly which, if he was correctly informed, gave a preference against British goods. Certain large and important contracts had gone to the United States for no other reason than that the freight thence to South Africa had been as much as 50 per cent. less than from this country. There was no question of greater urgency and importance to British trade at the present moment than this.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said it appeared to him that there was something wrong about the Department. They were told that complaints were made and that the President of the Board of Trade was not aware of them. That was not a satisfactory state for any Department to be in. He thought his hon. friend the Member for Derby could hardly be satisfied with the answer he received.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said that some months ago a Commission was sent to South Africa to inquire into the question of trade with the new colonies, and when that Commission returned there would be no delay in publishing their report. If it should appear convenient to publish a preliminary report, that should be done. The question of shipping rings was, of course, a very difficult one. He thought his speech at Leeds had had, as it was intended to have, the effect of considerably reducing the freights which were at that time being charged. What he suggested was that the Government Departments concerned should regard themselves as if they were members of the trading community, and should use their powers, if possible, to obtain a reduction of freights for the public in general. He had been in communication with other Departments, and especially with the Colonial Office, on the matter.

Mr. DALZIEL said he did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the reduction in freights was the result of his speech at Leeds. The reduction had been really due to competition. What he complained of was that the Government supported the high rates charged by the ring, and gave no encouragement whatever to the competitors who were responsible for the reduction which had taken place.

Mr. WHITLEY asked whether he was correctly informed that the Government Departments, with which the right hon. Gentleman said he had been in communication, were shipping all their goods by the ring, and in that way supporting instead of weakening them.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR was understood to say that he had nothing to add to the answer he had given.

Mr. WHITLEY said the Committee looked upon the right hon. Gentleman as the guardian of British trade, and therefore he was entitled to ask for an answer.

Colonel ROPNER (Stockton) said that the so-called shipping ring consisted of a good many lines running to Cape Town and elsewhere which had been in existence a good many years. Merchants had been in the habit of shipping not whole cargoes but small quantities of goods to South Africa, and consequently were not in a position to engage a whole steamer, but had to ship by lines which were running. Up to a certain point there was no opposition to these lines, but he was pleased to say, as a shipowner, that there was opposition now both from this country and America, with the result that the liners were reducing their rates as far as they could in order to drive the new comers out of the trade. Merchants, however, must not expect anything like the rate of 10s. per ton to be maintained, because no steamer could possibly carry goods at less than 20s., and if goods were taken at 10s. it was simply because the liners were opposing the new comers. This was a matter that was sure to right itself, and he could not see how the Government could interfere. The liners had a right to form a ring, and until opposition broke up their ring they had a perfect right to stick out for as high rates as they could possibly obtain. To say that the President of the Board of Trade should put the matter right was an absurdity. The liners, just as much as merchants, had a right to do as they pleased, and it was for the opposition to combine among themselves, obtain steamers of their own, and send out their merchandise, not by fractions and small quantities, but by a full cargo.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said that the hon. Member for Stockton had mistaken the point. The carriage to South Africa from America was 50 per cent. less than from this country, and their point was that the Colonial Office and other Departments shipped goods to South Africa by the ring steamers. They wished the President of the Board of Trade to bring his influence to bear on these Departments to see that all the goods shipped by the Government should be shipped in vessels running in opposition to the ring, and thereby bring down the rates of the ring. At present he understood all the goods from the Colonial Office were shipped by ring steamers, and therefore they supported the ring as against the general traders. He insisted that the President of the Board of Trade should bring his influence to bear at once on behalf of the general traders and not back up the ring.

MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) said that all round the coast there were a large number of fishermen who were employed during a few months of the year in sailing pleasure boats for the people who visited seaside towns. He was a Member of a County Council which encouraged the study of navigation amongst these fishermen so as to enable them to handle their boats with greater ability, and consequently with a greater measure of security to those who entrusted their lives to their care. He had communicated with the Board of Trade in regard to what were called "Skippers' Certificates," which were granted to seamen after qualification, because he contended that the conditions of the examinations for these certificates required reconsideration. He must admit that the Department had given very careful and sympathetic attention to his plea, but it appeared that there were limits beyond which the advisers of the President of the Board of Trade would not allow him to go. In reply to a deputation of fishermen who brought their case before the Board of Trade on the ground that though much of the work of these men was done within three miles of the shore, yet they frequently sailed much greater distances—to Holyhead and the Isle of Man, for instance—the right hon. Gentleman said that the Board of Trade were not prepared to relax the existing rule which demanded two years' service in deep-sea fishing boats before the certificates were granted. The difficulty was in defining the expression "deep-sea fishing boat," and a cook or steward who served on a so-called "deep-sea fishing boat" might present himself for examination, and if he passed the examination obtain a skipper's certificate. A cook or steward on a "deep-sea fishing boat" was therefore better off in regard to the skipper's certificate than the fishermen to whom he referred, who went with their boats a considerable distance out to sea. He asked the President of the Board of Trade to look into this matter and see whether some arrangement could not be made which would allow of an alteration in the existing rules for granting the skipper's certificate.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he wished to bring the attention of the Committee back to the subject of the South African shipping ring. The importance to this country and to South Africa of this matter did not seem to be realised. He had just come from South Africa, where he had found a bitter sense of wrong in regard to the ring steamers. The system had been worked in such a way as to practically throttle trade. Not only were the most outrageous freights charged, but a system of rebate was held *in terrorem* over traders.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must confine himself to criticism of the action, or want of action, of the Board of Trade, and not discuss the general question.

MR. HARWOOD said that his point was that the Government were not doing their duty to South Africa, and to the trade between this country and South Africa, in regard to their action towards this shipping ring. The Government gave the ring the mails to carry, and generally imparted strength to it. We had made sufficient sacrifices for South Africa to feel that the Government was bound to do everything they could to promote business between this country and South Africa, which produced very little food, most of which had to be carried there by sea. He believed that shippers in Germany and in the United States had a better means of trading with South Africa than the merchants and manufacturers in this country, and he insisted on behalf of the traders both here and in South Africa that the Government ought to put their weight in the scale against the shipping ring.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he should like to recall for a minute the attention of the Committee to an incident which had occurred that afternoon, and which in his long recollection and experience of the House he had never seen paralleled. His hon. friend the Member for Somerset moved a reduction of the Vote on the specific ground that the complaints of agriculturists as to railway rates had not received sufficient attention from the Board of Trade. The President of the Board of Trade denied that such complaints had been received by his Department, and then the President of the Board of Agriculture stated specifically that the complaints had passed through him and his Department to the Board of Trade. There should be some further explanation on the part of the Government in regard to this matter.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR (who was very indistinctly heard) said he could only repeat that so far as he was aware no complaints had been brought forward to the Board of Trade. His right hon. friend, the President of the Board of Agriculture, had stated that certain complaints had been forwarded by his Department to the Board of Trade, and he could not gainsay that positive assertion or carry the matter further until he was in a position to go to his Department and consult the documents there. He might then ascertain exactly how the matter stood between his right hon. friend and himself. As far as he could recollect he had not known of any such complaints having been made, but if he had misled the Committee he must express his regret.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said that the remarks which had just fallen from the right hon. Gentleman showed what a peculiar state of things existed in the Government. He did not remember any other instance in which the heads of two Government Departments had so contradicted each other on a matter of fact which must, at any rate, be in the knowledge of their subordinates, and which should be in the knowledge of the heads of Departments. A representation from one Department to another was a matter of so much importance that he could not for a moment suppose that any subordinate would keep it from the knowledge of his chief. The matter could not remain as it stood, and he thought that the Committee would feel that it had got to be cleared up, and that they should know what was the state of things between these two important Departments, the Board of Agriculture and the Board of Trade. He might express the opinion that under the circumstances it was hardly becoming for one Department to contradict another without further notice being taken of it. In regard to the question of shipping rates it was quite true, as had been said by the hon. Member from the North of England opposite, that the powers of the Board of Trade to interfere with the rates which shipping firms chose to charge were very limited, if they existed at all. But it was also true, as had been stated by hon. Members from Yorkshire and Lancashire, that the Government were shippers themselves, and they could use their shipping orders to bring down freights. It would be right for the President of the Board of Trade to represent to the other Departments of the Government that they ought in their capacity of shippers to endeavour to prevent rates being charged which were injurious to our traders and also to the traders in South Africa. As to the question raised by the hon. Member for Derby, he should like to express the opinion that the Board of Trade had hardly done as much in the way of limiting the hours of labour of railway servants as might have been done. He was quite sure that that was from no want of earnestness on the part of the President or the Secretary of the Board of Trade, and he thought that the strong expression given in Committee would have the effect of strengthening the hands of the Board of Trade, and that the railway companies would not, in future, oppose so dogged a resistance to the representations made to them by the Board of Trade.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he could not allow what the right hon. Gentleman opposite had said to pass without comment, especially as it affected his old colleague and constant friend, the President of the Board of Agriculture. He could only regret that his right hon. friend was in such a position as to prevent him giving that undivided attention and free criticism to the Estimates in which he used to indulge. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had suggested that his right hon. friend's conduct was improper.

Mr. BRYCE: Unusual.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that the charge really came to this, that the President of the Board of Agriculture had neglected to do his duty and failed to bring certain grievances of agriculturists, of whom he was the champion, before the Board of Trade. Naturally enough his right hon. friend got up and denied that he had so neglected his duty, and the President of the Board of Trade did not venture to question that denial. He said that his knowledge was negative; but it might become positive in a minute, for the right hon. Gentleman had a subordinate sitting under the gallery, from whom he might learn whether representations had been made, and then he would be able to make a proper apology.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he hoped the President of the Board of Trade would undertake to investigate the question of the shipping rates to South Africa; and that he would make substantial and determined representations to the other Departments of the Government, in order that they might transfer some of their patronage to the free shipping lines. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he had communicated with the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office. He wished to know if the representations of the right hon. Gentleman had been received by these Departments, as there appeared to be a laxity in the receipt of communications from one Department to another. If the right hon. Gentleman would promise to throw himself into this question, and endeavour to break down the prohibitive rates to South Africa, he would give a large measure of satisfaction. The Committee wanted a definite promise from the right hon. Gentleman that he would exercise all his influence and energy in trying to relieve British trade with South Africa from this great bar, and especially with the newly acquired colonies. Leicester was a great shipper of soft goods to that part of the world, and its greatest competitors were American and German manufacturers. All his constituents asked for was that they should have the same facilities for shipping to South Africa as the Americans and Germans had. If the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that no stone would be left unturned by him and his Department to break down this monopoly he would satisfy the Committee at that stage.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he had already stated that he had made representations to the other Departments, more especially to the Colonial Office, that one way and the best way, perhaps, to get the rates reduced was for the Government to regard themselves as a trader, and by means of the large amount of goods shipped by them to South Africa to secure better terms for the public at large. He could do nothing further. It remained with the other Departments to determine what action they would take.

MR. DALZIEL said he was sorry that the replies of the right hon. Gentleman on many points were incomplete. With regard to the shipping rates, the right hon. Gentleman stated that he made representations to other Departments. What reply did he receive? Was it satisfactory, or was it unsatisfactory? Did it encourage him to persevere, or was he treated with silent contempt? Surely they had a right to expect that if a Minister of the Crown wrote a letter upon an important national question, he should be able to tell the Committee what reply he received. The right hon. Gentleman's knowledge was very imperfect, and he had not that grasp of the affairs of his Department which the Committee had a right to expect. He himself was rather in a difficult position with regard to the Amendment. The Amendment, in effect, asked the Committee to censure the right hon. Gentleman because he had not acted on the complaints which had been made to him by another Department. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had not received such complaints, and if he had not received them, he himself would be inclined to support him. But the Committee had the unprecedented spectacle of the President of the Board of Agriculture telling the right hon. Gentleman that he had stated to the Committee, to put it mildly, something that was inaccurate. Therefore, the Committee was asked to decide between the statement of the President of the Board of Trade and the statement of the President of the Board of Agriculture. That was a position which the Committee ought not to be asked to assume; and if there was ever a case in which a vote ought to be postponed it was assuredly the present case. The right hon. Gentleman could not obtain the information with regard to the charge made against him until he had looked up his letters to see what complaints had been made. Therefore, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of obtaining the necessary information he begged to move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the position taken up by the hon. Gentleman was a very unreasonable one. It was quite obvious that information on the matter could be afforded on the Report stage of the Vote, and the only result of the Motion of the hon. Gentleman would be the indefinite postponement of that stage. He would, of course, inquire into the exact state of affairs between himself and his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture; and if he found he had made a mistake he would express his regret on the Report stage of the Vote. But until he could ascertain definitely, the matter must remain as it was.

MR. DALZIEL said that in view of the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, he felt inclined to accept his suggestion; but he hoped the Report stage would be taken at an hour when there would be an opportunity for discussion.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he would convey that representation to his right hon. friend the Leader of the House.

MR. DALZIEL said he hoped the representation would be successful. He begged leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 90; Noes, 206. (Division List No. 66.)

AYES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John

Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A.(*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kitson, Sir James
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
M'Kenna, Reginald
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. HnC.R(*Northants*
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, A. (*Carmarthen, E.*)
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Bell.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r.*
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (*Glasgow*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare. Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N. R.*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockie, John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James

M'Iver,SirLewis(*Ed'nburgh,W*
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell,W.J.H.(*Dumfriessh.*
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Brien, P. J. *Tipperary, N.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lt.-Col. Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Ridley,Hn.M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild,Hon.LionelWalter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(*IsleofWight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,H.C(*North'mb.Tyneside*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. S. (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wodehouse,Rt. Hn.E.R.(*Bath*
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, MajorW. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood
and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said the question he desired to raise was rather of local interest, though it also had considerable Imperial interest attaching to it. Last year it was raised by the hon. Member for the St. Ives Division of Cornwall, and this year would have been raised by the late Member for Camborne but for the Committee having been unfortunately deprived of his presence. It related to the provisions of harbours of refuge on the coasts of Devon and Cornwall. This he considered was a most opportune time to raise this question, having regard to the fact that the Press stated that on Thursday next the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 to distribute, and the fact that the Government were going to give £12,000,000 to the Irish landlords. If the Government had so much to give away then he would plead for a little of their riches.

*THE CHAIRMAN: What I understand the hon. Gentleman is asking for is a grant-in-aid of a harbour.

MR. SOARES said what he was asking for was a Committee of Inquiry into a suitable site for a harbour of refuge. A Committee had already reported that a harbour of refuge ought to be made, and he now asked for a Committee to inquire into the most suitable site.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That would seem to be more applicable to the Vote for harbours.

MR. SOARES pointed out that he was criticising the action of the President of the Board of Trade in not appointing a Committee to enquire into the most suitable site. Year after year lives were lost which were one of the most important assets of the State. The life of a sailor in full possession of his faculties was to the State worth £1,000. The Select Committee which investigated this matter in 1884 discussed two questions, first, the provision of great national harbours of refuge, and secondly, the provision of small harbours of refuge for fishermen. With regard to the provision of large harbours of refuge the Committee were unanimously of opinion that one ought to be provided somewhere between the Land's End and the Welsh coast, and with regard to a harbour of refuge for fishermen one ought to be provided on the north coast of Cornwall. There had been many reports to the same effect, and what he now asked for was a Committee of Inquiry as to the most suitable site. A Parliamentary Committee thought a harbour of refuge was absolutely necessary, and all Members representing divisions on that part of the coast were agreed that it was necessary. They were not urging the Board of Trade to put the harbour in any particular constituency, but were quite willing to be guided by the opinion of his experts. Last year when the matter was brought up the answer of the President of the Board of Trade was most unsympathetic. The right hon. Gentleman said that if the harbours were constructed vessels would hug the shore and so run unnecessary risks. That argument seemed to be on all fours with the argument that they could not have a fire station in any particular street lest all the people living in the street should be tempted to set their houses on fire. The right hon. Gentleman also said there was sufficient refuge at present. The right hon. Gentleman meant, no doubt, that ships could run under the lee of Lundy, but that was not sufficient refuge, and small vessels could not run there if there were many large ones already there, because of the risk of the small ones getting crushed if a great sea came on. Then the right hon. Gentleman said he would find one third of the cost of the harbour if the locality would find the rest. But everybody knew that the people of the locality were mostly agriculturists.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is now clearly discussing Vote 10, Class I.

MR. SOARES said he would not discuss the matter further than to say that the localities were unable to assist the right hon. Gentleman in the matter, and the question before the Committee was simply whether a Committee of Inquiry should be appointed to inquire into the most suitable site for these harbours of refuge, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not refuse to grant this most reasonable request.

*MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) emphasised the reasonableness of the request, which had his entire support. He quite agreed it was a national question. The shipping concerned was up and down Channel chiefly. When they recognised the importance of the shipping interest, and remembered that during the last six years our imports and exports had increased by £167,000,000, they surely ought to take every step that was practicable to afford protection to those engaged in this important branch of national work. He felt that as an influential Committee had reported in favour of a harbour of refuge they ought to decide which was the most advantageous place for the protection to be afforded; and then proceed to carry the idea into execution. Everybody recognised the importance of economy at the present time, but all sections would agree that money expended in saving life was well expended in the interests, not only of humanity, but economy as well.

SIR WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead), having had practical experience of the coast in question, supported the appeal which had been made. Forty years ago he was on a vessel which was caught in a south-west gale and sprung a leak. They made for the Bristol Channel. As the ship began to settle down they had to take to the boats, in which they drifted about for fifteen hours before they were picked up. Had there been a harbour of refuge on that coast the ship and cargo could all have been saved. There was a real necessity for a harbour of refuge on the north coast of Cornwall and Devon. There were many sites and plenty of material, and the President of the Board of Trade would only be doing his duty to the State by causing inquiry to be made as to the best site for such a harbour.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said this matter had been discussed every year since he had been President of the Board of Trade, and he was afraid he would not be able to satisfy the hon. Member who had raised the question on the present occasion, as he could only repeat the reply he had previously made. The Committee to which the hon. Member had referred reported that as a general rule it was not expedient to make grants of money for harbour construction, but to that rule it made certain exceptions, one of which was that a harbour of refuge should be made somewhere between Land's End and the coast of Wales. But the kind of harbour the

Committee had in view was one of those great national harbours—

> "Whose site, extent, and mode of construction should be determined, not only by considerations of how the Navy and Mercantile Marine of the country may best be protected from storm, but even more by considerations of strategic defence and Imperial policy."

In other words, a great naval harbour. That Committee was appointed in 1884, and reported in 1886, so that nearly twenty years had elapsed without any move having been taken, either by the present or any other Government, in the direction suggested by the Committee. He ventured to say, moreover, that if a move was to be made in that direction, it would be for the Admiralty rather than the Board of Trade to take the initiative, because the Admiralty would be principally concerned in a harbour of that kind. The Committee further suggested that grants of public money might be made "to a limited extent in aid of works which provided refuge purely for fishermen," and as a part in which it might be desirable to construct such a harbour, they mentioned the coast of Cornwall between St Ives and Hartland Point.

Mr. SOARES: The report says:

> "Your Committee believe it falls entirely within the province of the Government to provide a much-needed refuge in this district."

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said that if the hon. Gentleman thought the passage inconsistent with the other he could only say it was impossible to quote the Committee to advantage. However that might be, a long time had passed since the Report was made, and the subject had been repeatedly under the consideration of Governments, and not only those of one Party. When the Party opposite was in office, nothing was done. Since then the Government had adopted a general policy with regard to these applications for the construction of harbours at the public expense. They had appointed a Committee, called the Harbour Grants Committee, to which all applications from local authorities were to be made. He had repeatedly suggested that application should be made in the first instance by the local authority. It could then be considered in the regular way by the Committee appointed for that purpose; and he had gone further, and said that, in this particular case, he was prepared to urge on the Treasury that they should not require the full contribution which, under the Treasury rules, would be ordinarily required from a local authority making such application. Beyond that he did not see, at the present moment, he could possibly go without absolutely upsetting the whole policy decided upon by the Government in connection with grants-in aid for local harbours. He again suggested that the local authorities should be the first to move in the matter, and if they did he could assure them any application made by them would receive every consideration.

Mr. SOARES: Having regard to the extremely unsatisfactory reply, I beg to move a reduction in the Vote of £200.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £200, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade."—(*Mr. Soares.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 67; Noes, 167. (Division List, No. 67.)

AYES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Fenwick, Charles
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Newnes, Sir George
Norman, Henry
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.

Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (*Northants*
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Soares and Mr. Charles Allen.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r.*
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (*Glasgow*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hanbury, Rt. Hon Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N. R.*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnstone, Heywood
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockie, John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W J. H (*Dumfriesshire*
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W (*Stalybridge*
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H C (*North'mb, Tyneside*
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said that with regard to the business for next week he had been making such inquiries as he could, and he had come to the conclusion that it would be most convenient to take the Education Bill on Tuesday, and the Land Bill in the week following.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would name the day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As early in the week as I can.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could not fix the Bill for the Monday and Tuesday of that week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that that was the arrangement he was most anxious to carry out, but he could not give a definite pledge.

MR. DALZIEL asked how many days would be allotted to the Education Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will make no promise.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

SCOTTISH FISHERIES.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he trusted that the matter he now desired to call attention to was one on which Scotchmen of all opinions were agreed. They brought the question forward in the interests of bare and simple justice for the people. They were appealing for protection of their property, living and lives, and it was not too much to ask that that smal modicum of justice which was theoretically accorded to all His Majesty's subjects should be extended to them. He did not believe there was a Scotchman in the House who in his heart did not support the Resolution he now had the honour to move. He regarded this question as a matter of grave national importance, affecting as it did the whole well-being of the country. He was not one of those who thought the future of this country was to be nothing but a question of bricks and mortar, wholly dependent for its food supply on foreign countries, and that rural life would become ancient history, and he thought the danger of the food supply, which was present now in the minds of Ministers, should be sufficient incentive to grant these people justice, and thus enable them to live upon the land of their forefathers. Fishing was the sole means of livelihood of many districts in his constituency, and if that went down and was ruined, owing to the constant depredations of trawlers, the people would inevitably be driven from the land and come to swell the starving populations of the towns, which would be a serious matter for the serious consideration of this House. Steam trawlers came within the three-mile limit and took that which they had no right to take; besides which they destroyed a vast amount of food, and thus brought starvation to the homes of many in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. They had been told that these trawlers contributed to the naval defence of the country 250,000 seamen, but he believed that the majority of the sailors who manned these trawlers were foreigners. It was true that these trawlers brought an enormous amount of fish to the market, but much of it was often sold for manure, and large quantities were often taken back and thrown into the sea, because it could not even be sold for manure. The injury done to the fisheries must indeed be great when even the great trawling companies were interesting themselves in this matter. They found that day by day they had to go farther afield, because the grounds that used to yield a fair supply did not now yield sufficient to pay a fair wage to the men engaged. There were trawlers and trawlers, honest and dishonest, and he, of course, was only referring to those trawlers who contravened the law.

The great ocean was a mystery to all, but there was ample room for science and capital to make every effort to increase the food supply of this country without coming to take away the livelihood of the fishermen and destroying their homes. With the resources at its command the Scottish Office did all that could be reasonably expected of it. All the complaint he made of the Scottish Office was that their weapons were rusty and out of date, and that they wanted something better than their existing measures to deal with this vital question. They had been told that patrolling was distasteful to the British Navy, but this he did not believe. He believed that no work could be more congenial to the Navy than to protect the fishing industry of the country, and to show the popularity of the Navy he would only mention that when an unfortunate accident overwhelmed the "Active" subscriptions were raised throughout Orkney and Shetland for the sufferers in that disaster. During the last month or two he had presented petitions from practically the whole of Shetland, and from practically all the inhabitants of the North Isles of Orkney, and in one reply from the Office he had received occurred the following sentence:—

> "Lord Balfour cannot but think that there is a good deal of exaggeration in that part of the petition which deals with the state of things as it now exists."

That was in a letter of March 23rd. In the *Shetland Times* of April 4th, less than a fortnight after the above letter, reports appear of several trawlers being brought before the Sheriff's Court at Lerwick, and there were also reports in the same paper of vessels prowling about the fishing-ground without lights, cutting a boat's lines to pieces, and almost running her down. That is more than an answer to his Lordship's suggested exaggeration, and the same paper comes to the natural conclusion that for every one caught ninety go scot free. It takes as much pluck and two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage for an open boat to go and try and take a trawler's number as it would for one of us to go downstairs unarmed to try and capture a bloodthirsty burglar. The trawlers think nothing of threatening the defenceless fishermen with steam and hot cinders, and sometimes even attempt deliberately to run them down. During the last few years the coastguard were entitled to report illegal trawling. He thought they should be allowed to go further; that they might be provided with suitable steam launches in order that they might not only carry on their ordinary duties for the protection of the revenue but might be a check on these evildoers. If such steam launches were provided greater and further security would be given to the fishermen. The total take of fish for the month of March last in Shetland was 450 tons, valued at £450, as against 4,000 pounds three years ago and 2,000 two years ago. Of course there had been a good deal of bad weather, and the fishermen might not have been able to do their best, but the fact remained that the fisheries were deteriorating, and there was nothing else to depend on. There was no agriculture and no industries, and if the fishing stopped or was taken away the country would be turned into a desert. It simply meant that the population would either be reduced to starvation or would have to leave the country, and every well wisher to the country who recognised how much we depended upon the people of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for the supply of sailors for the Navy would regard that as a most deplorable result. If nothing was done in the next few years, not only would fish become infinitely dearer in this country, but thousands of families would be reduced to want and ruin. He begged to move.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) seconded the Motion. He said he could not help thinking that so far as Scotland was concerned this was a matter of even greater importance than that which the Committee would discuss to-morrow—when the Chancellor of the Exchequer would present his Budget—because so far as Scotland was concerned this was a matter of life itself. They had heard what would be the ultimate result in the northern parts of Scotland unless this matter was attended to soon. He believed the Government were not altogether unsympathetic. What was wanted was more backbone at the Scottish Office in dealing with the matter, and he hoped one result of the debate would be to make good this defect. Nothing in our tables of statistics was more pathetic than the figures relating to the industry now under discussion. In ten years line fishing had been practically thrown to the winds. Even the existing law had been loosely administered, and he hoped the Government would see that it was more strictly enforced in the future. There was a marked increase of trawlers, but there was no increase of preventive measures. His hon. friend the Member for Orkney and Shetland had suggested a means of dealing with this without materially increasing the outlay, and his suggestion was that a greater preventive force might be engaged. He suggested that occasionally some of the Admiralty gunboats, in addition to the Fishery Board cruisers, might be employed for this purpose. At the present time the trawlers knew exactly what the movements of the Fishery Board cruisers were, and that was not the way to detect the crime which was being perpetrated by the trawlers. He would give the Committee an instance. A gentleman residing in the constituency of his hon. friend went out to fish in the bay, not far from his place of residence, and while fishing there a trawler came into the bay and trawled all over the water. That was what would continually happen unless there was a complete patrol. He thought the Admiralty gunboats were admirably suited for this purpose, and it would afford the men on board an opportunity of doing some useful work.

The second suggestion he wished to make was that the penalties for illicit trawling when discovered, should be increased. Unless his information was very faulty he understood that it was a very common thing for a trawler to have over £120 worth of fish on board, and consequently it paid to go and take £120 worth illegally when they only ran the risk of being fined about £50. He suggested, in the first place, that the penalties should be largely increased, and in the second place that they should be exacted against the right person. Very often it was only the captain who was tried, and he was under the impression that it had been held that the captain was the only person responsible. The person to be tried ought to be the person who employed the captain and pocketed the proceeds. If an illicit trawler was prohibited from landing fish for three or six months, he thought they would hear very little of illicit trawling in the future. He thought they ought to do something more than was being done at present in regard to taking more severe measures to deal with trawlers carrying a foreign flag. What was there to hinder the Lord Advocate introducing some measure by which foreign trawlers should be placed upon a list which could be circulated at the various ports? If the illicit trawlers, which were mostly owned by the inhabitants of Great Britain, could be easily identified it would be a very simple thing to prevent them landing fish in Great Britain, and they might also subject their employees to the laws and penalties of this country. He had great pleasure in seconding the Motion of his hon. friend, and he hoped that they would have a satisfactory reply from the right hon. Gentleman, and a distinct and definite promise that something more would be done to remedy these evils.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the protection afforded by the Government to the fishing interests round the coasts of Scotland is entirely inadequate."—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said the Government should insist upon the trawlers keeping outside the three-mile limit, because at present they came in after dark and destroyed the spawn, and were, consequently, bringing ruin upon the line fishermen. A petition had recently been forwarded to the King signed by 2,000 people in the Island of Lewis, which showed that the line-fishing industry, which used to be a source of wealth to that island, had been utterly ruined. These trawlers came during the night, and not only covered their numbers, but used no lights. Under those circumstances, what possible chance had the line fishermen to prevent their industry being ruined? The suggestion made that coastguardsmen should have launches and facilities for getting at these trawlers was a good one, for they would in that way be able to get the numbers, and prosecutions could follow. The Secretary for Scotland ought to approach the Admiralty for assistance in the way of gun-boats, and, failing that, the Secretary for Scotland should apply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for money for additional fishery cruisers to police the seas and protect the industry of the line fishermen. He could not understand why the Government were so blind to the importance of protecting and preserving this great national asset, the line fishermen, because they wanted men for the Navy, and the line fishermen provided the very material they required. The sons of the line fishermen were bred and born to a seafaring life, but the course the Government were now adopting was simply to drive these people into the slums of large cities where a weakly race would grow up instead of the hardy population of the fishing villages. He had spoken upon this question many times, and he hoped the Lord Advocate would give some satisfactory answer. He was glad the Secretary for Scotland had the courage to visit the Island of Lewis, and he hoped the noble Lord now realised that something must be done for the 30,000 people residing in that island. The Colonial Secretary and the Secretary for Scotland were the only Ministers who had had the courage to go across to the Island of Lewis, other Members of the Government knew very little about crofter life. He trusted that good would result from the visit paid by the Secretary for Scotland to the Island of Lewis, and he hoped the Government would see the importance of doing something to ameliorate the condition of the people of that island. These were matters which required the serious consideration and the best attention of the Scottish Office.

*Mr. BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs) supported the Motion, and said that from time to time he had had opportunities of examining the books kept in connection with the line fishing trade, and he could assure the Committee that the amount of money realised by the line fishermen was hardly sufficient to pay for the bait with which they fished. The trade of the line and drift fishermen was on the verge of extinction, and hundreds of them were being driven quite recently to the herring fisheries. It appeared to be considered that when they had caught the fish it did not matter how they caught it because it was an article of food and must be considered accordingly. But surely it was only reasonable to take into consideration the fact that these trawlers, with lights out and their numbers covered, came in generally on a Sunday night near the shore, and within fifteen minutes completely filled "the far end of the" net with small fish, rock, and stones to such an extent that this one-third of the catch became pulp, and was absolutely destroyed. It might be urged that the remaining two-thirds of the catch was good fish, but anyone who went to Billingsgate Market would see two prices of fish, one for trawled fish, and the other for hooked fish, and the latter fetched the highest price. It was a well-known and admitted fact that when the trawlers remained outside the three-mile limit they did not destroy the fish, and this fact was a proof that a large quantity of the fish sold in Billingsgate Market was caught within the three-mile limit. Unless the Government went to work in earnest, and properly policed our shores, there was only one inevitable result, and that was that in a very short time the trawlers would totally exterminate the fish round our coast, and would destroy the industry of a most praiseworthy set of inhabitants. He cordially supported the Resolution.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said there was one very important point upon which he hoped the Lord Advocate would make a statement. He wished to know what progress had been made with the negotiations that the Government were conducting with the North Sea Powers in regard to trawling in the Moray Firth by foreign trawlers. He should be the very last person to criticise the policy of the Government in closing the Moray Firth, although he admitted that the trawling industry had a certain grievance in that respect. He did not, however, think that it was a great grievance, because the fishery reports showed that the catch of foreign trawlers in the Moray Firth was probably not more than one-half per cent. of the total. No doubt it was irritating to British trawlers to see foreign trawlers in the Moray Firth. He understood from a statement made by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs that some negotiations were going on. Those who were taking an interest in this question would be pleased to hear what progress had been made. They did not know the nature of these negotiations, and he would be pleased to hear whether they referred to the Moray Firth or to the three-mile limit. The fisheries round our shores could never be properly policed without some extension of the present boundary. He thought His Majesty's Government was somewhat to blame in this respect. He understood that the International Law Society, of which the Lord Chief Justice was president, had passed certain resolutions proposing that there should be an international congress to discuss this very important question. He understood that in 1895 the Dutch Government actually applied to our Government with the view to the opening of such negotiations, but our Government distinctly resented the proposal. He thought that was unsatisfactory. He could not see why there should not be a certain limit for fishery matters, and another limit for international matters. The three-mile limit was extremely arbitrary. The reason it was chosen was that it was the range covered by a cannon shot from the shore at the time. A cannon shot now carried far beyond the three-mile limit.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) said he had never complained of the ventilation of this subject of the fisheries. After listening to the debate he was rather at a loss to know how the speeches delivered in its course were held to support the Motion. That Motion was an unhesitating condemnation of the Government for giving inadequate policing to the northern seas; but the mover had disarmed him at once by disclaiming that it was in any sense a party question, and by doing more than justice to the work of the Scottish Office and of the Fishery Board, because he said he was quite certain that they had done everything they could with the means which were at their command. It was quite true, of course, that the hon. Member who seconded the Motion did not quite follow that line, but his criticism was of such a general character that it did not do anyone much harm. He himself was far from wishing to make this question a party matter either. He did not see many Members on the Front Bench opposite, but the fact that the question was not dealt with when they were in office—he did not say it as a matter of party recrimination—showed that they probably felt that they could not deal with it. There were two views always in a fishery question, and although they slid into each other it was perhaps as well to discriminate between them. There was what he might call the natural history question—that was to say, how far the food supply was really injured by the operations of the trawlers. He had never hesitated to give as his humble view that trawling could not go on in inland waters without causing a certain amount of harm, but at the same time he recognised that the subject was full of difficulty, and that it had given rise to varied opinions even among experts. Nobody could read the Fishery Board's Report of last year on the evidence brought before the Committee on undersized fish without feeling that this was a question on which there were a variety of opinions. Many Members felt that the mere question of inland waters was a drop in the bucket, and that it depended upon the great fishing banks in the North Sea generally. Another question was the extent of reserved ground for the line fisherman to exercise his calling. That was only to be supported on very different principles, especially when they came to consider negotiations with foreign Governments. The North Sea was the common property of all nations, and it, was to the interest of all that the fish supply should not be diminished. He had been asked about the extension of the three-mile limit to a thirteen-mile limit. He could not specifically answer that question, but, generally speaking, the negotiations were at the present moment mainly directed to the protection of inland waters and not to any general extension of the territorial limit. It was all very well to remind them that the range of cannon shot was the probable origin of the national doctrine of the three-mile-limit, but it must be remembered that a general doctrine was a very difficult thing to alter, and although the three-mile limit might be an anachronism it would be very difficult to get it altered, because it took with it questions of sovereignty and the right of jurisdiction of the sea.

He now came to what they were supposed to have left undone. He did not need to defend himself more than to take the frank admission of the hon. Member who moved the Motion when he said that they had done all they could with the resources at their command. He thought that the attack, such as it was, had been made because they did not have more cruisers. They would only get more cruisers in two ways, either by having more money or obtaining further assistance from the Admiralty. Hon. Members had never yet persuaded the House as a whole that the policing of the sea for this purpose was a matter of Imperial concern, in the sense that they would get Imperial money for it. The cruisers they now had were paid for out of Scotch funds. Some years ago they had a grant from the Government and they persuaded the people of Scotland that it would be good to use a certain amount of money, with the result that they had a private policing establishment for the purpose of protecting the fishermen. The consequence was that Scotland was the only part of the three kingdoms which had a private police establishment. Such protection as was now provided was provided by local effort. It was not out of the way to remind the hon. Member who moved the Motion that the district he represented had never formed itself into a fishery district, as it could do under the Act of 1895, and had not taken any steps towards local effort for the protection of local fisheries. The consequence was that there were other parts of the Kingdom which would like very much to have protection, but they had never yet persuaded the House to vote funds out of the Imperial Exchequer. As to the position of the Admiralty he was afraid it was useless to say that it would be a popular thing for the Admiralty to do a little chasing of the trawlers. Although the Admiralty gives a certain amount of assistance, he should be really concealing the true situation if he said he thought there would be the slightest chance of getting more assistance from the Admiralty. The defence of the Admiralty was that their ships had other things to do and that they could not spare any more ships for use for this purpose. It was not a question of misunderstanding between the Departments, and if the Admiralty said they could not detail more ships for this purpose, they did so on their own responsibility and the attack must be made on the Admiralty. The suggestion had been made with regard to penalties. These could not be altered without legislation. Personally, he was anxious that the penalties should be made greater, not only in pecuniary amount but also in such a way as would provide for getting at the people who made the profit instead of at the unfortunate skipper. Any movement in that direction would have his hearty support. The suggestion of Mr. Black as to foreign trawlers was impracticable. It was not possible by an act of administration to prevent foreign trawlers from coming into the ports. There was an Act of Parliament which said that landing at Scottish ports was illegal, and if so they might prevent any fish being landed. The matter had not been discussed in a full House and he thought cogent reasons could be advanced for not taking the steps suggested by the hon. Member.

Captain SINCLAIR (Forfar) said a sentence dropped from the Lord Advocate which threw a very lurid light on the way the interests of Scotland were attended to in this and other matters. The hon. and learned Member said quite truly that the Scotch Members had never yet succeeded in persuading the House that this grievance was so important that additional steps should be taken to endeavour to remedy it. That was just the complaint which his hon. friend had brought forward in moving the Motion, namely that the interests not only of his constituency but of Scotland generally were so remote to a great many Members of the House that it was difficult to get these matters dealt with. The Scotch Members were all alive to the fact that the fishing industry of Scotland was a much more important interest than the fishing industry of England. He believed that was the reason why they had the separate police establishment of which the Lord Advocate made mention, and which was perfectly justified by the importance of the fishery industry of Scotland. The Lord Advocate reproached the constituency of Orkney and Shetland for having taken no steps to form a Fishery District Committee there. The Lord Advocate would remember that there had only been one effort over the whole of Scotland to form a Fishery District Committee under the Act, and that that effort was frustrated by the objection of the representatives of one small burgh, which under the provisions of the Act it was quite open for them to make. That rendered the provisions of the Act entirely inoperative. That was a point which was discussed during the discussion of the Bill in this House. It was the duty of Government to punish the lawbreakers, and he hoped the Lord Advocate would persuade the Government to bring in legislation towards that end.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILLS IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) moved, "That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Law, etc., that they have power to extend the provisions of the County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill to Scotland."

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Law, etc., that they have power to extend the Bill to Scotland.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

ADDENBROOKE'S HOSPITAL BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Sir RICHARD JEBB (Cambridge University) moved the Second Reading of the Addenbrooke's Hospital Bill, which, he said, was unopposed.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present,

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Ten o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 23rd April, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PORT OF LONDON BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 7th day of April, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Port of London Bill.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petitions for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz :—

Land Drainage Provisional order Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 1) BILL.

Ordered, that the great Eastern Railway (No. 1) Bill be re-committed to the former Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) (re-committed) Bill and the Great Eastern Railway (No 2) Bill that they have power, if they think fit, to consolidate the said two Bills, or any part or parts thereof respectively, into one Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have leave to proceed with the said Bills to-morrow.—(*Mr. Ernest Gray*).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Borrowstounness, Cambuslang, Irvine, Kilmalcolm, and Kirkintilloch, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abersychan, Calverley, Falmouth, Horsforth, Launceston, Maesteg. Walton-upon-Thames, Warmley, Whickham, and Wigan (Rural), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bexley (Extension), Bridgwater and District, Bromley (Rural), Hendon (Amendment), Huddersfield (Extension), Leatherhead and

District (Extension), Prestwich (Amendment), Stroud, and Whitchurch and Pangbourne, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Borrowstounness, Cambuslang, Irvine, Kilmalcolm, and Kirkintilloch," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under The Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abersychan, Calverley, Falmouth, Horsforth, Launceston, Maesteg, Walton-upon-Thames, Warmley, Whickham, and Wigan (Rural)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 6) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bexley (Extension), Bridgwater and District, Bromley (Rural), Hendon (Amendment), Huddersfield (Extension) Leatherhead and District (Extension), Prestwich (Amendment), Stroud, and Whitchurch and Pangbourne," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161.]

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Low Stubbin (No. 2); Whitehaven; Braysdown Pit; Camerton Pit; Kilmersdon Pit; Bishop Sutton Pit; Upper Conygre Pit; Huish Pit; Foxcote Pit; Writhlington Pit; Ludlow's Pit; Norton Hill; and Lower Conygre Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Reading; Bournemouth (two); Dover; Harrogate; Torquay; Pudsey; Middleton; Eastbourne; Ilford; Leytonstone; Forest Gate; Weston-super-Mare; Barnsley; Bridgwater; Brighton; Sunderland; Mossley; and Kingston-upon-Hull; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Stenton; Bellie; and Girvan; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Leeds, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Borrowstounness, for alteration: to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Bristol, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Paisley (four); Edinburgh (four); Glasgow; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petition from Oldham, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: from Newhaven; and Brighton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Brighton (two); and Hove; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Whitehaven; Low Stubbin (No. 2); Braysdown Pit; Upper Conygre; Ludlow's Pit; Writhlington Pit; Norton Hill Pit; Foxcote Pit; Lower Conygre; Kilmersdon Pit; Huish Pit; Camerton Pit; and Bishop Sutton Pit Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) (NUNS EMPLOYED).

Return [presented 21st April] to be printed. [No. 115.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March 1903 [by Command] to lie upon the Table.

FORESTRY (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to enquire into and report upon British Forestry, with Appendices and Index [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (EDUCATION COMMITTEES).

Copy presented, of Statement of Schemes for the formation of Education Committees approved up to 31st March by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd April; *Mr. Bonar Law*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2959 and 2960 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS.

Copy presented, of Scheme for the Management of Chew's Foundation, in the parish of Dunstable, in the County of Bedford, founded by Deed of 16th September 1724 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.]

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1903-4).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Scotch Education—Leaving Certificates.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the Lord Advocate, whether he is aware that under the regulations for leaving certificates, a candidate who desires to take dynamics as an additional subject, though he has already passed in higher mathematics, is compelled to undergo another examination and pass again in the latter subject; and, if so, whether he will take steps to render the second examination in higher mathematics unnecessary.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The rule in question has been adopted in order to check a tendency to cram up a special subject and to neglect the mathematical knowledge on which it ought to be based. Experience so far has confirmed the expediency of such a rule.

London Elections Bill—Date of Second Reading.

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state when the Second Reading of the Bill for the rectification of the London Parliamentary Borough Boundaries will be taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Bill referred to has not been introduced this session. In reply to a question on the 2nd of March last,† I pointed out that last year's Bill was introduced on the assurance that it would meet with no opposition, but that in fact it was opposed from both sides of the House. I added that I was not prepared to deal with the matter in the present session unless I was satisfied that the Bill would be treated as an unopposed measure.

Plumbers and Electricians in the Navy.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether men holding the rating of plumber or plumber's mate will be permitted to change it to electrician, provided they possess the necessary qualifications.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) So long as the direct entries of electricians continue sufficient to meet all requirements, it is not intended to permit transfers from other ratings within the service.

Savings Bank Department and the Telephone Service.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of his decision to employ the telephone service at the Savings Bank Department, Kensington, in preference to the telegraphs, he will explain why the telegraph apparatus has been used since this decision was made known; and whether he will state the number of telegrams sent from the Savings Bank to the Central Telegraph Office from 8th April to 16th April, inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) It became necessary, owing to the pressure of work, to supplement the telephonic communication between the Savings Bank and the Central Telegraph Office by Wheatstone telegraphic apparatus on the Saturday before Easter and the following Tuesday. It will be necessary to do this probably on a few other days in the year. The number of telegrams sent from the Savings Bank to the Central Telegraph Office from the 14th to the 16th April, inclusive, was 3,248, and there were 3,452 in the opposite direction. The transfer to the new buildings was not completed until the 14th, so that I only give the figures from that date inclusive.

Irish Lights Commission.

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he proposes to take any steps, and what, to bring the Irish Light Commissioners and their work within Parliamentary control.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am aware that representations have been made from time to time in favour of a reform in the constitution of the Irish Lights Board. The question, however, is properly one for the consideration of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade.

Depopulation of Ireland.

Captain DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attenton has been directed to the numbers of emigrants leaving Ireland almost daily for America; and whether, in view of the consequent depopulation of the country and of the fact that farmers each year experience greater difficulties in working their farms owing to the scarcity of labour, with a view to provide a remedy, he will consider the desirability of enlarging the provisions dealing with the labourers in the Irish Land Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There has been a decrease, small but still gratifying, in the number of emigrants from Ireland during the first three months of 1903 as compared with the corresponding period of 1901 and 1902. In the first quarter of 1901 the figures were 4,974; in 1902, 4,395; and during the past three months, 4,153. The second inquiry can more properly be dealt with in Committee on the Land Bill.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxviii., 1099.

Baghdad Railway Convention—Article IV.

Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to the terms of Article IV. of the Convention alleged to have been granted to the Anatolian Railway Company by the Turkish Government, whereby the proposed Railway to Baghdad and Bâsra is to be finished within eight years, subject to any delays arising out of *force majeure*, such as a war between European Powers or a radical change in the financial situation of England, Germany or France; and whether he is able to explain the meaning of the reference to the financial situation of England in this said Article.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)—As I have already stated, His Majesty's Government are in possession of a copy of the Convention in question; but they are in no sense parties to it, and cannot therefore be called upon to explain its provisions.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Marksmanship.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty have the Admiralty given attention to the great variations between the marksmanship records of various ships of the fleet, and to the fact that whereas some ships have scored no hits at all others have scored over 70 per cent. of hits, and that the general average is so low as about half the highest results attained. Are they aware that defective marksmanship is partly due to the inadequate supply of practice ammunition for breech-loading quick-firing guns. Are they aware that it is also in many cases principally due to the inadequate interest taken in gunnery as compared with other matters by admirals, captains, and senior executive officers, the concurrence of all three of whom with the gunnery officer is required in order to afford any ship the requisite facilities for gunnery training. And, will they consider the advisability of making the admiral, the captain, the senior executive officer, and the gunnery officer all personally responsible for success in marksmanship in their respective fleets and ships; and of causing it to be understood that upon the adequate results of the gunnery of the fleet or ship will depend the retention of the admiral and the captain of their respective appointments, and the promotion of the senior executive officer, as well as that of the gunnery officer.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The firing returns from all ships are carefully scrutinised both at the Admiralty and in the gunnery schools, and the attention of the officers concerned is specially directed to all cases in which the firing has been unsatisfactory The approbation of the Board is expressed when specially good results have been obtained. The supply of practice ammunition has recently been revised, and it is not considered inadequate for the purpose. With regard to the third paragraph of my hon. friend's Question, the Board are of opinion that it conveys a serious imputation upon the officers alluded to, and that the statement contained in it to the effect that such officers are indifferent to one of their principal and most important duties is absolutely incorrect, and involves an unjust reflection upon them. In answer to the fourth paragraph, the Board see no reason for altering the existing regulations, which clearly lay down that the attainment of "good shooting and efficiency in gunnery are always to be considered as taking precedence over all other duties," and that special reports with regard to gunnery efficiency are to be forwarded to the Admiralty for consideration at the time of the half-yearly recommendations of lieutenants for promotion.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not impute indifference to admirals and captains except as compared with other matters—that was to say, paint and brass work.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir, that is exactly the point. Such a suggestion conveys a very serious imputation, for which there is no foundation whatever.

The Disaster in Somaliland.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government have received any news from Somaliland.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Yes, Sir, we have received the following telegram from General Manning:—From Colonel Swann, Bohotle, To the Secretary of State for War, April 22. Following message received from General Officer Commanding (begins):—Twenty miles to the west of Galadi, 18th April. Regret to report that flying column under the command of Cobbe, which left Galadi 10th April reconnoitre road to Walwal, as reported in my 110 of 8th April, has had most serious check on 17th April. On morning of 17th April Cobbe, at Gumburru, forty miles to the west of Galadi, had decided to return to Galadi owing to serious difficulty in finding road to Walwal and short of water. He was about to leave zariba when firing was heard in direction of small party under command of Captain Olivey which had been sent in a westerly direction to reconnoitre. At 9.15 in the morning Colonel Cobbe despatched Colonel Plunkett with 160 2nd Battalion King's African Rifles and 48 2nd Sikhs and two Maxim guns for extrication of Captain Olivey if necessary. As a matter of fact Olivey had not been engaged. Plunkett on joining Depôt continued to push on. At 11.45 in the morning Colonel Cobbe heard heavy fire in direction of Plunkett, and at or about 1 o'clock in the afternoon a few fugitives coming in reported Plunkett defeated with loss. News fully corroborated since, and I have to report total loss of Plunkett's party with exception of thirty-seven Yaos who have arrived."

Latest information extracted from fugitives is dated 8 30 o'clock in the afternoon 17th April; is as follows:—That Plunkett pushed on after enemy's force to open country seven miles to the west of Gumburru. Here he was attacked by very strong force of mounted troops and enemy's infantry, who attacked at close quarters.

He kept back enemy's forces until no more ammunition, when he formed square and charged (with) bayonet in direction of Cobbe's zariba. He moved for some distance in this manner, but a great many, inclusive of Plunkett, killed and wounded by enemy's force in pursuit. At last enemy's infantry overwhelmed square and annihilated all with exception of 37 fugitives above mentioned.

Following reported missing, without doubt killed in action:—

Officers, 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles: Colonel Plunkett, Captains Johnston-Stewart, Olivey, Morris, MacKinnon, Lieutenants Gaynor and Bell.

2nd Sikhs: Captain Visey [? Vesey].

Indian Medical Staff: Captain Sime.

Rank and file: No. 2176 Private Laurence Ensor, 4th K.R.R.C.; No. 1589 Private John Barrow, 4th K.R.R.C.

Rank and file, native soldiers: 2nd Sikhs, 48; 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, 124

Two Maxim guns also lost.

Colonel Cobbe reports result of slight fighting on 16th April — Lieutenant Chichester, Somali M.I., killed in action.

Received earliest account from Cobbe 8 30 o'clock last night, 17th April, bearing date 1 10 o'clock in the afternoon, to the following effect:—That he feared that Plunkett had been repulsed with serious loss, started immediately after for Gumburru with 300 2nd Sikhs, 60 3rd Battalion K.A. Rifles. Kenna, with all available M.I.—namely, 100—started at once; at the same time ordered to push on as fast as possible.—COBBE.

Further information from above mentioned reached me marching. Cobbe encamping with 220 troops; plenty of food supplies and four days' water. He has about 1,000 camels and does not think he can withdraw from there with them without help, because the scrub is thick and the enemy's forces seem likely to act on the offensive.

I march again directly to-night at moonrise, expecting to arrive at Gumburru to-morrow at noon. I shall accomplish extrication of Cobbe with as much as possible transport and shall return to Galadi. Can only carry sufficient water for march to Gumburru returning direct with Cobbe, and therefore unable to advance against an enemy's forces if he keeps back. Will telegraph as soon as possible with regard to situation of affairs as soon as I shall accomplish extrication of Cobbe.—MANNING. (ends.)

The Military Riot at Pretoria.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give the House any information as to the five soldiers sentenced to death at Pretoria for being concerned in a military riot.

MR. BRODRICK: No, sir. No report has been forwarded to the War Office. I have telegraphed for a report, but the hon. and gallant Gentleman is aware that, as these men were tried by the civil power, they have passed out of the jurisdiction of the War Office.

COLONEL NOLAN: I would like to address the same Question to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN was not in his place and no answer was returned.

Madras Law Students.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a notice recently posted in the Madras Law College forbidding the senior students taking part in discussions regarding public affairs; and, if so, will he state whether this notice has the sanction of the Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have no information as to the notice referred to in the Question; but it is a well-understood principle that students in Government Educational Institutions in India are expected to abstain from taking part in political agitation.

Delhi Railway Conference.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to an answer given in the Viceregal Council by the Public Works Member on the 25th of March, to the effect that the proceedings of the Railway Conference held at Delhi on the 2nd of January last had not been submitted to the Government, and that the Government had taken no action thereon; whether he is aware that the Conference was presided over by the Railway Secretary to the Government of India, and that a Government circular letter, dated 18th February, was issued upon the proceedings to all railway administrations inquiring what steps could be taken to increase the employment of Europeans and Anglo-Indians on the Indian Railways; and, if so, whether, in any policy initiated by the Government of India, he will take steps to secure that the employment of Hindus and Mahomedans shall not be interfered with.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My attention has been drawn to the answers given in the Legislative Council of India on the 25th of March last as to the employment of more Anglo-Indians on Indian Railways, but no action has been taken by the Government of India nor has the matter come under their consideration.

Lord Ampthill and Imputations on Indian Administration.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a speech by Lord Ampthill, Governor of Madras, as *ex-officio* Chancellor of the Madras University, in which he deprecated the discussion of administrative Acts and comments upon the conduct of public affairs and the effect of legislative and other measures affecting the general interest of the country; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what steps in the matter.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood the purport of that part of Lord Ampthill's speech to which his Question refers. What Lord Ampthill deprecated was not discussion or comment upon administrative acts, but the tone and temper of the imputations not unfrequently made as to the intentions and objects of the Administration. The advice thus conveyed to his audience seemed to me to be both salutary and needed.

Railway Construction in Northern Nigeria.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the construction of a railway in Northern Nigeria from Zungeru to Zaria, and thence to Kano, is under the consideration of the Government; and, if so, whether an estimate of the probable cost has yet been made.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): Arrangements are being made for a survey of the country between Wushishi (which is close to Zungeru) and Zaria, with a view to acquiring information which will assist in formulating a policy of railway construction in Northern Nigeria, but no decision has been arrived at as to the actual direction of a railway between those points, and until this has been settled no estimate of the cost of constructing such a railway can be made.

Native Labour for the Transvaal Mines.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the experimental recruiting of 1,000 natives in Central Africa for the Transvaal mines has yet begun; and, if so, what rate of wages per diem has been approved by the British Commissioner.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): This Question should have been addressed to the Foreign Office. The recruiting of natives, up to a maximum of 1,000, is now proceeding in the British Central Africa Protectorate. The following rates of wages have been approved:—Monthly payments to the labourers of £1 10s. without any deduction. In addition the Labour Association will pay 4s. a month for maintenance of wives and families left in the Protectorate, and a sum of 6s. for every native engaged, in respect of hut-tax due to the Protectorate Administration. Papers on the subject are about to be laid.

The Baghdad Railway.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury have His Majesty's Government considered that by Article VIII. of the Decree of Monharrem (8th December, 1881) any surplus arising from a modification in the Turkish Customs tariff in case of revision of the treaties of commerce was ceded by the Turkish Government for the service of the Turkish debt in an absolute and irrevocable manner until the complete extinction of the said debt; and, in view of that cession, can he state how any part of any sums arising from an increase of Turkish Customs duties can be applied towards the provision of payments for the kilometric guarantee proposed to be given to the Baghdad Railway, or be in any other way used in guaranteeing that railway.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): A modification of the terms of Article VIII. would be necessary in order that any part of the surplus arising from an increase of the Customs duties might be applied to purposes other than the service of the Turkish Debt. The consent of the Council of the Ottoman Public Debt, who represent the bondholders, would be necessary for any such arrangement.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, are His Majesty's Government aware that on the 31st January, 1902, the directors of the Anatolian Society, which has the concession for the construction of the Konia-Baghdad-Basra Railway proposed, by a written communication to the Turkish Government, that the desired kilometric guarantee for the railway of £1,400,000 should be secured on an increase of the Turkish Customs duties, on the creation of five monopolies of petroleum, alcohol, matches, cards, and cigarette paper, and on an arrangement for the unification of the Turkish debt; will these monopolies render necessary the prohibition of import into Turkey of or the imposition of prohibitive duties on the five articles named; were His Majesty's Government consulted as to this proposal; have they received a copy of the communication in question; and if so, will they lay it on the Table of this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: His Majesty's Government have not been informed of the communication to which my hon. friend refers, nor have they been consulted as to the proposal contained in it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Have the Government not received any information on this matter from the Ambassador at Constantinople?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that we have no such communication from the Ambassador to place before the House.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state whom the British Government has negotiated with, or been in communication with, or derived its information from, in the matter of the Baghdad Railway. I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state who are the members of the British group of financiers interested in the proposal to provide part of the capital of the Bagdad Railway.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer to both these Questions is in the negative.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury have His Majesty's Government received a copy of the Turkish Convention relating to the Anatolian Railway Company (Baghdad line) quoted by Mr. Vice-Consul Waugh in his report dated 9th March, 1903, as showing that the entire management of the line from Konia to the Persian Gulf is secured in German hands, independent of the nationality of the capital which may be raised to build the line; and, if so, when is it proposed to lay it upon the Table of this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: A copy of the convention between the Turkish Government and the Anatolian Railway Company to which my hon. friend refers is in our possession. This convention, a summary of which was published in *The Times* of yesterday, leaves the whole scheme of railway development through Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf entirely in the hands of a company under German control. To such a convention we have never been asked to assent, and we could not in any case be a party to it. The alternative arrangements which have lately been under our consideration were, on the contrary, designed to place the railway, including the existing Anatolian Railway, throughout its whole length from sea to sea, under international control, and to prevent the possibility of preferential treatment for the goods or subjects of any one country. In these arrangements it was suggested, *inter alia*, that equal powers of control, construction, and management should be given to German, French, and English interests. After careful consideration of these proposals, His Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that they do not give to this country sufficient security for the application of the principles above referred to; and they have therefore intimated that they are unable to give the suggested assurances with regard to the policy which they might hereafter adopt as to the conveyance of the Indian mails by the projected route, as to facilities at Koweyt, or as to the appropriation of a part of the Turkish Customs revenue in aid of the contemplated guarantee.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his answer, and I congratulate the Government on their decision.

The Passionist Fathers.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any official reports showing that a teaching body of English subjects (the Passionist Fathers) have been lately forced to discontinue their instructions in Paris owing to the late change in the French law; can he state if their property has been left undisturbed; and if any correspondence on this matter has taken place between the English Embassy and the French Government.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government have been informed by His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris that the application for authorisation presented by the Passionist Fathers in Paris has been refused by the Chamber of Deputies. The community being thus legally dissolved, a formal application has been made by Sir E. Monson with a view to the re-opening of the chapel in Avenue Hoche under the ministration of secular priests, and we have every reason to believe that this will be successful. We have no reason to think that there will be any interference with the property of the community. His Majesty's Ambassador has been in frequent communication with the French Government with the object of securing considerate treatment for the community.

Shipping Legislation.

MR. HARRIS (Tynemouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will consider the advisability of appointing a committee to examine the question as to how far the legislation applying at present to British shipping trading to ports in the United Kingdom can be extended to vessels belonging to foreign owners.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I would suggest to my hon. friend that the most convenient way of dealing with this subject would be for my hon. friend or some other hon. Member to introduce a Bill embodying the views of shipowners. If this is done the Government will be prepared to give favourable consideration to such a Bill on the understanding that if read a second time it is sent to a Select Committee.

Barnstaple Rural Postman.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Samuel Hopkins, an unestablished rural postman from Barnstaple to Ashford, was dismissed on the ground of ill-health on the 11th instant, no gratuity or pension having been given him; and whether, seeing that Hopkins is now fifty-five years of age, and has been in the employ of the Post Office for over twenty-one years, that he was receiving wages of 19s. 6d. per week, and was already in possession of one good conduct stripe, another being due to him this month, he will, having regard to the fact that Hopkins has no means of livelihood now open to him, consider the advisability of granting him a compassionate gratuity or a pension.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The services of Samuel Hopkins, unestablished rural postman from Barnstaple to Ashford, were discontinued on the 11th instant, because he had been absent through illness for a considerable time and was certified by the medical officer to be permanently unfit for the discharge of his official duties. I regret that his service was not such as to render him eligible for any award under the Superannuation Acts.

Kiladysert Police and the Press.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the petty sessions court in Kiladysert a reporter was removed from court by orders of District Inspector Patrick; and if so, will he state for what reason and under what authority the police exercised this power.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have called for a Report on this matter. The district inspector is absent on leave, and I hope to be in a position to reply to the Question on Monday next.

Evictions on the Berridge Estate.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the fact that fourteen families were evicted a few weeks ago on the Berridge Estate, in the Carna district of Connemara for non-payment of rent; and, if so, whether he will state the extent of the holdings and rental in these cases; and whether he can take steps, in the Land Bill or otherwise, to deal with the cases of rents upon holdings that are incapable of yielding rent

MR. WYNDHAM: The number of evicted holdings was eight, and six of these were occupied by joint tenants, or tenants in common. The extent of the holdings varied from sixteen to thirty-one acres; the rental from £5 to £8; and the arrears due from three to seven years. Seven tenants and sub-tenants were readmitted as caretakers. Section 5, Sub-section 3 of the Land Law Act, 1896, deals with the fixing of fair rents on holdings held by joint tenants.

Rosscarbery Mail Service.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether inquiries have recently been made with a view of establishing a second daily mail service from Clonakilty to Rosscarbery; and, if so, will he state whether he is prepared to give effect to the requests of the people of that town for a second daily delivery.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have already instituted further enquiries with the view of ascertaining whether it is now possible to provide a second post from Clonakilty to Rosscarbery, and I will inform the hon. Member of the result as soon as possible.

Roman Catholic University for Ireland and the Irish Land Bill.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Section 3, Sub-section (*a*), of the Ireland Development Grant Bill would enable the Government of the day to establish a Roman Catholic University for Ireland and endow it with the whole or part of the £185,000 a year by simply laying the scheme before the House of Commons for a period of not less than thirty days, and without the scheme being brought before Parliament as a Bill and discussed and carried through the various stages necessary before any measure can become an Act of Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Chief Secretary undertook some weeks ago to amend the provision referred to in such a way as to secure the discussion in the House, at a convenient hour, of any positive vote in favour of any proposal, prior to its taking effect. Therefore, it is not open to my hon. friend's criticism. But I would add that anything of such enormous importance and interest as the subject referred to by the hon. Member could not be dealt with even by Resolution before twelve o'clock.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: If this large sum of money is not to be used except in the ordinary way, I do not see why the exceptional course was taken of placing it on the Consolidated Fund.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Chief Secretary in his speech made out a good case for what I quite admit is an exceptional course.

THE LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will defer the Second Reading of the London Education Bill until after the London County Council and the London School Board have had an opportunity of considering the proposed measure, bearing in mind the fact that both these bodies had risen for the Easter recess before the Bill was issued, and have not yet had an opportunity of discussing it

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be convenient or possible to alter the arrangements we have come to. But, of course, the important bodies to which the hon. Member has referred and other bodies will have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the Bill between the Second Reading and the Committee stage.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON, Baronet, for the County of Cornwall (North Western or Camborne Division).

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILLS IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120.]

Minutes of Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 120.]

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 162.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the Borough Funds Bill:—Mr. Brigg, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Shepherd Cross, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Joseph Howard, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Peel, Colonel Sackville, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham.)

MR. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Sheep Scab Bill:—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Chaplin, Earl of Dalkeith, Sir Michael Foster, Sir Robert Gunter, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Price, Mr. Soares, Mr. Spear, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, and Mr. Warner.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the Local Government (Transfer of Powers) Bill:—Mr. Brigg, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Shepherd Cross, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Joseph Howard, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Peel, Colonel Sackville, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham.)

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

HOME INDUSTRIES BILL.

"For the better regulation of Home Industries," presented by Colonel Denny; supported by Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. John Burns, Mr. J. W. Wilson, Mr. Emmott, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday 17th July, and to be printed. [Bill 163.]

EDUCATION (BORROWING) BILL.

"To provide for the borrowing by Local Education Authorities for certain purposes," presented by Mr. Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 164.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS.

Ordered, that the Committee of Ways and Means have precedence of the Business of Supply this day, and that the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House).—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Sir, it has been my privilege for a great many years to listen to the Chancellor of the Exchequer explaining to the Committee the financial position and his proposals for the year I confess I have always felt a great deal of sympathy with previous Chancellors of the Exchequer in their discharge of what I have always thought has been certainly a complicated, and often a very difficult task. But, great as has been my sympathy with previous Chancellors of the Exchequer, it has never been so profound as it is with the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. I feel that I shall require at the hands of the Committee all the consideration and indulgence which it is in their power to grant to me to enable me to accomplish, even with moderate satisfaction, the task which now lies before me; and I am satisfied that, under all the circumstances, I shall not make an appeal for that consideration and indulgence in vain, but that it will be readily granted to me. I have peculiar difficulties to encounter in fulfilling the task which I have now to discharge. I am comparatively new to the responsibilities of the high office which I have the honour to hold; and I succeed a Minister who occupied this position, and, I think, occupied it with satisfaction to the Committee and to the House for a great many years, and who, at any rate during the latter portion of his term of office, had to deal with a very difficult situation. He had to finance a great and prolonged war—a task which, I hope, will not fall to the lot of any Chancellor of the Exchequer of this country for many years to come. He had to come down to the House and ask power from the Committee to impose, year after year, fresh taxation; and, in doing so, he displayed courage, resource, and above all, consideration to a very great degree. I am sure that even those who suffered, or thought that they suffered, from the new taxation which he had to impose will be the first to recognise that, consistently with the duty which he thought devolved upon him, he endeavoured to meet all the objections and suggestions which were made to him with the greatest consideration; and however much they disliked the taxation, they could not but admire the manner in which that taxation was imposed upon them.

My task is a more agreeable one than that of my right hon. friend. His task was to impose taxation. My task, I am glad to think, is to remit taxation. But do not let the Committee imagine that this task, although perhaps not attended with the same difficulties as the other, is by any means free from difficulty. I can assure the Committee that if they had the opportunity of studying my correspondence for some considerable time past they would find that, in comparison with the money I have to give away, the claimants are very numerous indeed. It is not an easy matter, when one has a limited sum to give away, to choose between the various directions in which it can be applied and to give satisfaction to all those who have made application. I have no doubt that, having regard to the fact that taxation is to be remitted, the Committee would gladly dispense with the long introduction which Chancellors of the Exchequer naturally have to make, and would like me at once to come to the point. I am afraid that my duty is to conduct them to that goal through, perhaps, long and tortuous paths; but I can promise the Committee that, if they will give me the patient hearing which I am sure they will give me, I will endeavour to mitigate their distress as much as I possibly can, and to go as rapidly over the various subjects with which I have to deal as I can, with justice to them and to the Committee. But, as the Committee will understand, I have necessarily much ground to traverse.

CONDITION OF TRADE.

One of the first concerns of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the position of trade and industry; and I am glad to say that the trade and industry of 1902, although not so good as in 1900, which, as the Committee knows, was a bumper year, were still in many respects better than in 1901. In some respects they were not so good. For instance, there is, so far as the returns show, a rather larger percentage of unemployed, although the percentage is by no means great, and will compare favourably with the average, yet it is somewhat larger than in both 1900 and 1901. Wages are also somewhat lower than they were in 1900; but the Committee will remember that the wages of 1900 were at a very high level; and it is not therefore surprising that, trade not being so brisk as it was then, wages have to some degree suffered. What is a very satisfactory feature of the case, I think, in a falling market for wages, is that there have been, comparatively, very few trade disputes. Both employers and employed have dealt with this question of wages in a conciliatory manner; they have met together in a friendly way to discuss the situation, and, as is the case in the great majority of instances where employers and employed can be got together to discuss the situation, they have been able between themselves to arrive at a conclusion with regard to wages which has been comparatively satisfactory to both—at any rate, it has been reached without any strikes or serious trade disputes. The foreign trade of the country, I am glad to say, shows an increase both in imports and exports. The home trade of 1902 also shows an improvement; and there has been an increase in the production of coal and iron. Railway traffic itself, which is important as an indication of the state of trade, has shown an increase of receipts both in goods and passengers. Bankers' clearances show considerable increases; and the tonnage of vessels entered and cleared with cargoes shows an increase of over 1,500,000, equal to 4 per cent., and I am glad to say almost the whole of that increase has been in British bottoms. I claim, therefore, that this state of things is not only satisfactory in itself, but that it may be considered fairly satisfactory when we come to compare it with the depression which exists elsewhere. The figures for 1903, as far as they have gone, are encouraging; and, while I do not think there is any great scope for jubilation with regard to our trade figures, I think there is much to inspire courage. But there is also much which should entail caution upon us; and I think the lesson we have to learn is in the direction which I have just hinted, that capital and labour should endeavour to draw closer together with a view to mutual understanding, knowing as they do that what is in the interest of one is in the interest of the other, and by friendly conferences and putting shoulder to shoulder they should strengthen their power of competing with foreign countries.

STATE OF THE MONEY MARKET.

With regard to the money market I need hardly say it has been a very difficult one; money has been very scarce and very dear. There have been great demands made by the Government to meet expenditure in South Africa, and they have been met, I am bound to say, in a patriotic manner. Along with the Government demands for money there have also been, as the Committee knows, demands on the money market from various quarters; and what is hanging somewhat like a cloud at the present time over the money market is the anticipation of further demands by the Government. It should, however, be remembered that the coming Transvaal demands are for conversion of securities and for reproductive works, that the war, which has been such a strain, is now over, and that the Sinking Fund is again in full operation and will, I trust, be strengthened. The question of depression in Consols, a very important one, will be referred to hereafter. I hope, however, to show in regard to that that there is nothing to excite either alarm or apprehension in connection with what is, and what will, I hope, always remain, the premier security of the world.

FINANCIAL OUT-TURN, 1902-3.

I now pass on to the out-turn of the past year, and in order that it may be followed it is necessary for me to go back briefly to the proposals of my predecessor, who, it will be remembered, last year produced what I will call a first edition of the Budget in April, when the war was going on, and the second edition in June, after peace had been concluded. The financial proposals of the first edition of last year's Budget were as follows: the expenditure for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer found he had to provide, after the suspension of the Sinking Fund, was £170,719,000; but as the end of the war was not in sight, he put the probable supplementary requirements at £17,750,000, bringing the aggregate requirements up to £188,469,000. To meet this expenditure he estimated that the existing sources of revenue would yield £147,785,000, and the additional taxes £5,150,000, together £152,935,000, the deficit with which he was thus faced amounting to £35,534,000. This deficit he intended to meet out of the proceeds of a loan of £32,000,000 Consols, and by draft on existing balances. But some weeks afterwards peace was arranged, and he was enabled to dispense with almost all the supplementary requirements. He had, however, already raised his Consols loan, issuing the stock at 93½, which would produce £29,920,000 in cash. This being so, he was strongly urged to drop his additional taxation. There was, however, considerable uncertainty about the requirements on the cessation of actual fighting; and he told the Committee that, if it turned out that he had more money than he required, he could usefully employ it in extinguishing some portion of the floating debt, and, moreover, he attached great importance to the re-establishment of the Sinking Fund at the earliest possible moment. Therefore, he resisted the temptation to dispense with the extra taxation, and, after re-establishing the Sinking Fund, the expenditure he had to provide for was £176,359,000. He expected the revenue, including the additional taxation, barring the duty on cheques, which he had abandoned, and after certain concessions in regard to the Corn Duty had been made, to yield £152,185,000. The deficit, therefore, was £24,174,000, which would be more than met by the estimated proceeds of the Consols loan, which amounted to £29,920,000; and he would thus have £5,746,000 spare cash, which would be available for unforeseen expenditure, or the repayment of debt. The wisdom of this arrangement made by my right hon. friend has been proved by subsequent events. Making peace has proved almost as costly as making war. If it has not been quite as costly, the cost has still been very considerable. It was found necessary in the autumn to help the Transvaal and Orange River Colony burghers on their return to their homes, and in making good some of the losses incurred in the war by other persons, these outlays involving an estimated expenditure of £5,000,000 in all. It was also deemed necessary to provide the Colonial Governments temporarily with money to enable them to make advances to their people; and the Imperial Government for this purpose granted a loan to the Colonial Governments of £3,000,000, which was included in the Supplementary Vote.

EXPENDITURE, 1902-3.

Let us see how the actual expenditure, as represented by Exchequer issues, compares with the estimated expenditure. In 1902–3 it amounted to £184,484,000, and it therefore exceeded the provision made last year, which was £176,359,000, by £8,125,000. This difference is almost wholly to be accounted for by the supplementary provision for the requirements of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, to which I have just referred. The total expenditure of £184,484,000, however, does not represent the entire outlay for which the State had to provide in 1902–3. Besides this, it handed over to the local authorities revenue amounting to £9,767,000; and it had to find money for expenditure chargeable to capital account, which came to £6,876,000; so that the grand total of the expenditure provided for by the State was no less a sum than £201,127,000. I will not trouble the Committee with the details of the issues on capital account, because the figures have been inserted in the paper in the hands of hon. Gentlemen.

COST OF THE WAR.

Before I have done with the expenditure for 1902–3 there is a subject on which the Committee will wish to have some information, and to which I rejoice to think that I can refer almost entirely in the past tense—I mean the war expenditure. The Committee will want to know what is the total charge which the war has entailed upon us, and also how much of the war expenditure has been met from taxation and how much from borrowed money. I will do my best to give the Committee full information on the subject, but they will understand, I am sure, that it is one which bristles with difficulties, and that it is almost impossible to earmark with any accuracy the charges due to a great war. You cannot draw any precise line between the expenditure which has been caused by the war and the expenditure which would have been incurred had there been no war. Even if you could, I doubt if an estimate of the cost of the war, which included all the many indirect additions to expenditure which must result from the war, would serve the purpose of the Committee. The definition of cost, I submit, must be framed on common sense lines, and after much consideration of every alternative method, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot give the information in any better form than that in which it has already been presented in a Return moved for by the hon. Member for Poplar. I do not claim for it, and no one could claim for it, that it is absolutely accurate, but it is certainly as accurate as any other return is likely to be, and therefore if the hon. Member for Poplar will move for a return of a similar character to that which he has already obtained, I shall be very happy to grant it. The matter is one which is quite familiar to the Committee, and I do not propose on this occasion to go into the details, but I will give one or two leading points. The charges on account of the wars in South Africa and China during the last four years up to the 31st of March, 1903, are estimated to have amounted to £217,000,000, or more than a quarter as much as the computed cost of the great French war which lasted eight times as long. Of this amount there was defrayed out of revenue £67,500,000. There will, therefore, have been met out of capital a balance of £149,500,000. This means that 31 per cent. of the expenditure was charged to income and 69 per cent. was charged to capital. It must be remembered, however, that we shall get at an early date £4,000,000 from the Transvaal Guaranteed Loan, and we shall also get £30,000,000 in respect of the war contribution which the Transvaal has to make us in addition to the repayment of the sum of £3,000,000 temporarily advanced last autumn to the Transvaal Government. There is also the British share of the Chinese indemnity to be borne in mind, which may be put at about £6,000,000. In this way it may ultimately prove that the net amount to be charged to capital on account of the war expenditure is not more than about £110,000,000 or £40,000,000 less than the amount I stated above. In this case the proportion will have been 38 per cent. charged against revenue, and 62 per cent. charged against capital.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): That includes the amount due to the suspension of the Sinking Fund?

REVENUE, 1902–3.

*Mr. RITCHIE: The calculation is on the same lines as in the former Return. I turn now to the other side of the account—the amount of the revenue. Taken as a whole, the amount paid to the Exchequer very closely approximated to the Estimates finally made by my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol. His estimate was £152,185,000 and the amount brought to account was £151,552,000, so that the receipts fell short of the estimate by £633,000—a very small difference indeed, I think, on so gigantic an amount, and one which reflects the greatest credit on those who had the framing of the Estimates. The deficiencies were: in Customs £767,000, in Excise £600,000, in non-tax revenue £166,000, together £1,533,000. These deficiencies were in part made up for by excesses in death duties representing £650,000, house duty £50,000, and income tax £200,000, together £900,000, leaving a deficit, as I have said, of £633,000.

I do not think it will be necessary to trouble the Committee with any great detail in reference to this revenue, but I ought to make one or two observations with respect to it. The part of the revenue that did least well was Customs, and the two articles on which the chief deficiencies took place were sugar and tea. The deficiency in the sugar revenue is due to more than one cause. It is due to the very large stocks that were in hand at the beginning of the year in consequence of the rush to clear, for fear of a rise in the duty, and also to the fact that the beet crop of 1902-3 was nearly 1,000,000 tons less than in 1901-2, which was a record year. It is perhaps also due in some degree to the suspense of operations connected with the Brussels Convention and to doubts as to the United States Treaty with Cuba, and likewise to the fact that bounty fed sugar can be stored more cheaply in the country of production than it can here. The deficiency in tea is in the main attributable to the anticipation of a reduction of the duty and the accustomed holding back. The only other Customs article to which I need refer is corn, on which the 1s. duty was last year re-imposed, and which has brought in nearly £2,350,000. Before leaving this part of my subject, I should like to say, and I think it is only just and right to say it, that the Customs have been very much assisted in the performance of a very difficult work in connection with the new duties by the manner in which they were met by the trade, who cordially co-operated with them in endeavouring as far as was possible to remove the difficulties that existed. I now come to the Excise. Neither beer nor spirits were quite up to the mark. Beer stood still. Spirits advanced as compared with the previous year, but not so much as we had hoped. Of course there are compensations. The failure of the first may be taken to be due to a cold summer, which does not promote thirst, the second to a warm winter which does not promote the consumption of spirits. So owing to the cold in the one case, and the heat in the other we have not derived quite the revenue which we anticipated. There was nothing abnormal about the death duties. There was no exceptional number of large estates, and the level of values has continued low, so that the good progress we have made may be put down to the extraordinary work in connection with the collection of arrears.

Notwithstanding the high rate at which the Income Tax was fixed, the produce has been more than satisfactory. It was not in any way due to any special pressure on the part of the collectors, for nothing is more remarkable than the fact that, notwithstanding penny after penny being added to the Income Tax, there is no appearance of any falling off, but quite the contrary, in the moneys derived from the payers of Income Tax. The Post Office receipts were hardly up to the mark, but there is nothing disquieting about them. The falling short in the Miscellaneous Revenue is more than accounted for by the diminished demand for silver and the consequent shrinkage of the profit made by the Mint.

THE BURDEN OF TAXATION.

Of this revenue of £151,552,000, a sum of £129,933,000 represents the proceeds of taxation, and, if we want to arrive at the total proceeds of taxation, we must add to this the amount of revenue assigned to local authorities, which I have already stated to amount to £9,767,000, bringing the aggregate up to £139,700,000. It is a record amount, and one which I hope from the bottom of my heart will remain a record amount. It means that we emerge from the war with a burden of £3 6s. 7d. per head of the population. The burden was high enough, Heaven knows, but at all events we emerged with a less heavy burden than was laid upon us at the conclusion of the great French war, one which we are much better able to bear. In 1815, when peace was re-established with France, the burden on the British taxpayer was equal to £3 16s. per head. The Committee may be interested to know how much of this enormous sum of £139,700,000 was raised by indirect taxation which, though it falls on the community at large, is more particularly felt by the poorer classes, and how much by direct taxation, which falls almost exclusively on the better-to-do. We must first, however, eliminate the coal duty, which produces £2,000,000, but falls under neither of those heads. So we have to deal with a total of £137,700,000 which represents a burden of £3 5s. 8d. per head of the population. Of the total taxation £65,330,000 was raised by indirect taxation, entailing a burden of £1 11s. 2d. per head of the population, and £72,370,000 by direct taxation, entailing a burden of £1 14s. 6d. per head; that is to say 47·5 per cent. has to be set down to indirect taxation, and 52·5 per cent. to direct taxation.

BALANCE SHEET, 1902–3.

Having passed in review both sides of the account for the last year, I find that the expenditure of 1902-3 having been £184,484,000 and the revenue having been £151,552,000, the deficit amounted to £32,932,000. This deficit has been met mainly by the proceeds of the Consol loan, amounting, with prepayments under discount, to £29,875,000, and the remainder, namely £3,057,000, has been taken out of balances. This represents almost exactly the amount of £3,000,000 repayable to us out of the Guaranteed Loan which we have advanced to the two colonies. A statement of the balances will be found in the hands of the Committee.

REVIEW OF NATIONAL DEBT, 1902-3.

Before I come to deal with the figures of the new year, I must make a few remarks on the National Debt. The broad features of the National Debt last year were two. First, there was a large issue of Consols in connection with the war; and secondly, the Sinking Fund, after being suspended as far as it could be for two years, was re-established. I draw a distinction, as my predecessors have done before me, between what may be called the dead-weight debt, the debt for which there is nothing to show, and the other debt for which there is something to show in the shape of capital works. The Funded Debt on 31st March last stood at £640,086,000, having on the one hand been increased by £32,000,000 Consols, and reduced, on the other hand, by the operation of Life Annuities and other miscellaneous means by £1,501,000; that is, having been augmented on balance to the extent of £30,499,000. The liability in respect of terminable annuities stood at £55,560,000, having been reduced in the year by the operation of the Sinking Fund to the extent of £4,735,000. The Unfunded Debt remained unchanged at £75,133,000, so that at the end of last year the total of the dead-weight debt was £770,779,000. To this total there should be added other liabilities which, having been increased by £7,370,000 in the year, stood on the 31st March last at £27,570,000, so that the State's aggregate liabilities amounted to £798,349,000, having been increased in the year by £33,134,000. The Committee will wish to know how much of the National Debt was necessitated by the war. I give the principal details. First, the Funded Debt was increased by the creation of Consols for £92,000,000; the Unfunded Debt, by the creation of the War Loan, amounting to £30,000,000, by Exchequer Bonds for £24,000,000, and by Treasury Bills for £13,000,000, altogether £67,000,000. The total War Debt thus comes to £159,000,000. This is an enormous sum to have raised in two years and a half, and I think it is very satisfactory that we have been so loyally and readily supported by the City. I doubt if my right hon. friend's difficulties have been appreciated. He had conflicting interests to reconcile as best he could; the interests of the nation which had to borrow on so gigantic a scale, and the interests of the Money Market which had to find such huge sums. I think it is wonderful how well he surmounted those difficulties, and I believe the interests of the tax-payers were well protected.

THE FALL IN CONSOLS.

Before leaving the subject of the National Debt, the Committee will expect me to say something about Consols and their fall. Much has been said and written with regard to the fall in Consols, and in some minds, apparently, there exists apprehension and even dismay at what they allege to be the great fall in the credit of the country. No doubt the fall has been very great, but before I come to the conclusion of the observations I have to make on this important subject, I hope that the Committee will agree with me that there is no reason for either apprehension or alarm. The fall has undoubtedly been very great, but both the high price which was reached by Consols at one time and the low price which they have touched lately have undoubtedly been abnormal, because of the peculiar circumstances of the time, both at the one period and at the other. The Committee will remember that in the year 1890 there was a great financial crisis. Confidence was much disturbed and shaken, and people in the City hardly knew from one day to another what might be expected to occur. The consequence was that all the financial houses in the City and elsewhere fortified themselves to meet any great demand that might be made upon them. And how did they make provision for meeting any demand that might arise? They made it by adding money to their tills, by taking care that they had large supplies of ready money. And how were they to obtain those large supplies of ready money? By the sale of securities. And the securities which are, I would almost say alone readily saleable at such a time as we saw in 1890 are Consols. Consols were very largely sold by all the financial houses in the City and elsewhere, in order to strengthen their position, and the money was added to the available balance which it was thought prudent on the part of those houses, to have ready for any sudden demand which might be made upon them. The consequence was that Consols, which were already below par, fell several points, and it must be remembered that at that time the interest was not $2\frac{1}{2}$ as now, but $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. A period of cheap money followed some time the crisis. There was a rapid output of gold in South Africa and American money, owing to the silver panic in the United States, poured into the British market for investment. The Bank rate for some years stood as low as 2 per cent., but even that did not represent adequately the low price of money at that time, because although the rate of discount in the Bank was 2 per cent., everyone who had anything to do with the City at that time knows that discounts could be obtained readily at considerably below the Bank minimum, and that, in point of fact, day to day money was often lent as low as $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and even $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Trade was not active, the Money Market was deluged with money, and the natural consequence was that people who found they could make a good profit by buying consols which yielded to them $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. and borrowing money from their bankers for which they had to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., went in largely for that profitable transaction. In addition to these causes which operated to raise the price of Consols again, the Government became a large buyer of Consols because of the growth of the Savings Banks deposits, which always increase largely when money is very cheap, but do not grow so largely when money is very dear. We had, as the Committee knows, to borrow at one time a good deal of money in connection with the redemption of Consols. When that operation ceased, more money was available, and so the Government added to the money which was in the market. All these circumstances created a great demand for Consols, while the supply of the material became shorter and shorter, with the inevitable result that Consols were forced up abnormally high. Then succeeded a period of great trade activity. Money was wanted; it became dear; and down went Consols again. The South African War ensued, expenditure increased, Government became large borrowers, the Sinking Fund was suspended, less money was paid into the Savings Banks, less gold came from South Africa; and another cause which operated, I think, was that people did not quite realise how soon Consols were to come down from $2\frac{3}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The category of Trust securities was enlarged; colonies and municipalities came into the market to borrow, and what wonder, then, that Consols had fallen, and fallen materially? To sum up the situation; we have during the last twelve or thirteen years been through two distinct periods; one of extraordinarily cheap money, so cheap that we were able to borrow twelve months Treasury Bills at the rate of interest of 13s. 9d. per cent. per annum—the other a period of extraordinarily dear money, so dear that we had to pay as much as £4 17s. 5d. per cent. per annum for six months bills. The cheapness and dearness of money would in any case have produced a marked rise and an equally marked fall in Consols; but the cheapness and dearness were both attended with exceptional circumstances which made the rise and fall more marked. When people talk of a record depression, and compare the price of Consols now with the price in 1870, they are not comparing like with like. They seem to forget that the stock is now of a different denomination. It was 3 per cent. in 1870; it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. now. It is, therefore, clear that a simple comparison between the prices of Consols in the two epochs gives no index of the comparative credit of the country then and now. Let us examine for a moment what is the equation of the two stocks both quoted at 91. With Consols at the price of £91 in 1870, the yield was nearly £3 6s. per cent. Now, at the same price, it is only £2 15s. So that the investor who in 1870 paid £91 to obtain an annual dividend of £3 would now pay £109 4s. for the same annuity. That is to say, that, if we ignore the fact that a stock above par is naturally depressed by the prospect of ultimate redemption, and if we suppose that the Three per Cent. Consols existed now, they would stand at over £109, or 20 per cent. higher than in 1870. Yet people, in the face of figures like these, are apprehensive as to the credit of the country.

CONSOLS AND FOREIGN GOVERNMENT STOCKS.

Before I leave the subject of Consols, I should like to refer to a correspondence which was opened by my hon. friend the Member for Exeter, whose opinion as a financial authority must necessarily have great weight. My hon. friend has drawn a somewhat depressing comparison between our credit and the credit of foreign countries in the past and present, as represented by the prestige enjoyed in the Money Market by the respective Government stocks. He makes out that, as compared with average prices during the period from 1895 to 1898, our stock has fallen much more than that of other countries. But it is hardly fair to take that period for comparison, because it was marked by quite an exceptional rise in the price of Consols, while there was no corresponding simultaneous rise in the price of foreign stocks. For the purpose of comparison I take the yield and not the price of the different stocks because of the difference of denomination. The yield of Consols fell from £2 6s. in 1895 to £2 in 1898, while the yield of French Rentes fell from £3 to £2 19s. only, and the yield of German Three per Cents. actually rose from £3 2s. to £3 4s. But if we are to draw comparisons, I think we ought to deal with a much longer period of time, so as to avoid the concatenation of extraordinary circumstances which has been so upsetting to our calculations. Let us take the period of ten years, and what do we find? We find that in 1893 Consols yielded £2 12s. per cent., French Rentes £3 2s., and German Three per Cents. £3 10s. 6d. At the present time Consols yield about £2 15s., French Rentes £3 1s. 3d., and German Three per Cents. £3 6s. 4d. Thus the prestige of French Government securities is much what it was ten years ago, that of British securities is a little lower, and that of German securities a little higher. If we bear in mind that German Three per Cent. stock did not come into existence until 1891, and, therefore, had hardly secured an established position in 1893, the difference to our disadvantage is very slight. When we also remember that we have gone through a great war, which necessitated our borrowing over £150,000,000, I think we may congratulate ourselves on the fact that the difference is not more marked; and that we may, with a light heart, put aside all the sorry prognostications made of late with regard to the financial position of the great stock of this country.

EXPENDITURE 1903-4—THE FIXED DEBT CHARGE.

I come now to the amount of expenditure for which I shall have to provide in 1903-4—namely, according to the Estimates, £144,331,000. The only item upon which I think I need comment is the charge in respect of the National Debt. Sir Stafford Northcote in 1875 instituted the system, which has existed ever since, of a fixed annual charge. That fixed annual charge had two duties to perform—to cover all the obligatory payments and to provide for the repayment of capital. Of course, as the debt diminishes, the interest paid out of this fixed sum becomes less and the Sinking Fund becomes greater. That is the simple way in which the Fixed Debt Charge works. The system is one from which I think the country has derived very great advantages. Certainly I have no intention of departing from it. On the contrary, I hold most strongly that it is in the highest degree necessary both for the maintenance of our credit and the stability of our finance, that a fixed debt charge should be maintained; and maintained at such a figure as to provide a Sinking Fund for the extinction of debt adequate to the amount of the debt. It is rather curious to notice that the debt at the time when Sir Stafford Northcote instituted this charge, which he fixed at £28,000,000, was almost precisely the same as it is now. It was then £769,000,000, as against £770,000,000 at the present time. But it will be remembered that the interest on the debt at that time was 3 per cent., instead of 2½ per cent. as it is now. Therefore, a very much larger proportion of this fixed charge of £28,000,000 had to go in payment of interest, and a very much smaller sum in extinction of debt than would be the case with a fixed charge of that amount now. I estimate that an annual charge of £25,500,000 would now be as effective for the redemption of the debt as £28,000,000 was at that time. The amount of the annual charge has been varied more than once. I shall be perfectly prepared, if necessary, to defend the variations that have taken place;

but I do not consider it necessary to trouble the Committee by doing so at the present moment. The amount of the annual charge fixed in 1899 by the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me at the Exchequer was £23,000,000; of which £17,250,000 went for interest and £5,750,000 for extinction of Debt.

It now becomes necessary to reconsider the amount to be allocated to the annual charge. The Committee know that there is at present a considerable sum, amounting to about £4,500,000, interest on the war debt, which is at present outside the fixed charge. It is quite clear that it is not good finance that that amount should remain outside the fixed charge. It would be absurd to have one portion of the interest on our debt inside the fixed charge and another portion outside. Therefore I propose to bring the interest on the war debt within the fixed charge. In determining the amount at which that charge should be fixed there are certain considerations which the Committee must remember. One is that, in pursuance of the memorable conversion scheme which was carried out by my noble friend Lord Goschen, and which will always be associated with his name, Consols have now become 2½ per cent. stock, and the charge for interest is lightened by ¼ per cent., which amounts to an annual sum of £1,250,000. Another consideration is that, as a consequence of the war, we have added no less that £159,000,000 to the National Debt. Before, however, deciding finally what shall be the annual debt charge, the Committee should bear in mind another consideration; and that is that, in pursuance of the arrangement made by my right hon. friend the Secretary for the Colonies, we confidently hope to obtain from the Transvaal this year—and it will be obtained immediately—£4,000,000 out of the proposed guaranteed loan in repayment of colonial expenditure which we had previously provided for out of Imperial funds, and in the course of the three following years a further sum of £30,000,000, by way of contribution towards the expenses of the war. Bearing all these considerations in mind, I come to the question at what amount should the annual debt charge be fixed, so that it should not be too heavy a burden for the taxpayer, and yet bear a proper proportion to the amount of the debt. I think there is nothing so well calculated to raise and maintain our credit as large purchases on account of the Sinking Fund. I have therefore decided to fix the annual debt charge at £27,000,000.

AMOUNT OF PROPOSED SINKING FUND.

It is estimated that from this amount there will be available for the Sinking Fund during the year £6,600,000, as compared with £5,750,000 last year; but as we receive the payments on account of the war from the Transvaal the amount available for the purpose will be largely increased, and at the end of five years it will be nearly £9,000,000, or 1·25 per cent. of the entire debt. Let us see how this compares with former years. On March 31st, 1875, the debt was £769,000,000, and the Sinking Fund portion of the debt charge in 1875–76 was £4,092,221, or ·53 per cent. of the debt. On March 31st, 1887, the debt was £736,000,000, and the Sinking Fund in 1887–88 was £4,963,000, or ·67 per cent. On March 31st, 1889, the debt was £698,000,000, and the Sinking Fund in 1889–90 was £5,100,000, or ·73 per cent. On March 31st, 1899, the debt was £627,000,000, and the Sinking Fund in 1899–1900 was £5,800,000, or ·92 per cent. On March 31st last the debt was £770,778,000, and the Sinking Fund will be £6,600,000, or ·85 per cent. On March 31st, 1908, we calculate that the debt will be £694,000,000, and the Sinking Fund £8,841,000, or 1·25 per cent., the largest amount, both absolutely and proportionately, which has ever been applied. It must be borne in mind that the Sinking Fund will be much more operative, with Consols at or below par, than it has been for some time past. I believe I am not taking too sanguine a view of the operation of the Fund when I say that, if the debt is not added to, and if the annual charge is maintained at the proposed amount, the whole of this gigantic debt can be wiped out within fifty years from now. That is a startling proposition, but I believe it to be none the less true.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): You will have some more wars before then.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 1903-4.

*MR. RITCHIE: The fixed Debt charge, then, being £27,000,000, the total expenditure for 1903–04 will stand at £143,831,000. To this must be added this year's proportion of the proposed Development Grant to Ireland in the Bill now before the House, two-thirds of £185,000, or £123,000, so that the total expenditure I have to provide is £143,954,000. It is a very formidable expenditure to meet, and, speaking as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I naturally have a very sincere sympathy with those who press for its reduction.

BURDEN OF NAVAL AND MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

The most formidable part of it, the part which strikes the imagination most, is the amount spent on our armaments—£34,457,000 on the Navy, and, after allowing for the extraord nary services for which we have to provide this year, £27,588,000 on the Army — in all £62,045,000. That is a gigantic amount, and I do not wish to minimise it at all. But when people talk about the country being "bled to death in time of peace," or say that "flesh and blood cannot stand" such an expenditure, I would like the Committee to consider for a moment how we have stood such a crushing burden in the past, remembering always that the burden is relative to the back which has to bear it.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham Mid.): The sugar tax and the poor.

*MR. RITCHIE: People forget that our back is much broader now. What was the burden on the taxpayers of a generation and a half ago? Let us cast our memories back to forty years ago, to the year 1863–64, when our military charges had undergone a great reduction, when economy, under Mr. Gladstone, in accordance with public opinion, was in full swing. The Army and Navy Estimates proposed in that year appear to us, by comparison, ridiculously small—on the Army, £13,107,000, and on the Navy £10,556,000—no more than £23,663,000 in all. Now what proportion does that expenditure bear to the national income of that day—which, in other words, is the back which has to bear the strain? How are we to estimate the national income? No doubt it is an extremely difficult and problematical calculation to make—so difficult and problematical that I hardly like to attempt to make it. But as regards what is believed to represent about one-half the aggregate income of the nation, we are on safe ground. We have got the gross assessments to the Income Tax. I have excluded for the present purpose incomes derived from Government securities, for two reasons — in the first place, because such income is not earned, but is merely abstracted by means of taxation, and because, in the second place, this will eliminate the greater part of the incomes drawn by foreigners from this country, for presumably their principal holdings are in our Government securities. Having made these deductions, we arrive at a gross assessment to the Income Tax in 1863–64 of £314,300,000, and the Army and Navy outlay of £23,663,000 in that year represents 7·5 per cent. on £314,300,000. The corresponding gross assessment to the Income Tax in 1903–04 we take to be £879,000,000. Now, 7·5 per cent. upon the latter figure would be £65,925,000 while the actual provision proposed for the ordinary Navy and Army services is, as we have seen, £62,045,000. So it may be said that, even with the present gigantic armaments, we are proposing to spend now less relatively to our means than we were spending forty years ago. This may be thought surprising; I believe it to be accurate. It may be interesting to know the respective burden per cent. on the Army and Navy in the periods under comparison. In 1863–64 the burden per cent. of the Navy was 3·3, whereas for 1903–04 it is 3·9. In 1863–64, when economy was fashionable, the percentage of burden of the Army was 4·2; in 1903–04, when, unfortunately, economy has gone out of fashion, it is 3·1. So, while the naval burden has relatively increased, the military burden has relatively decreased. So far, therefore, as the burden on the country of our naval and military expenditure is concerned, it is some comfort that we are not worse off, but better off, than we were then.

DESIRABILITY OF REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS.

But I hope that my having drawn that comparison will not lead the Committee to believe that I wish to make light of our expenditure on armaments. On the contrary, necessary though it may be, I confess I view it with great concern, more especially when our annual outlay on other objects is inevitably growing at such a pace. As regards Army expenditure, I hope we may be able to make considerable reductions in the next year or two, as reorganisation on a normal peace footing becomes complete. With regard to the Navy, a strong fleet for us is not a matter of advantage or convenience only; it is not a mere gratification of national pride; it is for us a matter of life and death. It is not an instrument of aggression, it is the safeguard of national existence. And more, it is not a matter, I am glad to think, of party controversy. Our trade and industry, the trade and industry of our colonies and dependencies, our supplies of food and raw material, the employment of our people, all depend on our supremacy at sea. To preserve this we will grudge no cost. Certainly, so far as I am concerned, I will never be responsible for crippling the efficiency of our Navy by refusing to find the means for maintaining our command of the sea. Cobden once declared that he would spend £100,000,000 to maintain the irresistible superiority of our Fleet; and there is not, I feel sure, any responsible body of persons who would not be prepared to agree with Cobden. Our naval preparations are no menace to any foreign Power. Happily we are on friendly terms with all. When Cobden gave expression to the opinion I have quoted it was of France that he was thinking. I am very glad to know that our position is quite different to-day. The relations between the two Powers are of the most cordial description. We all hope that the mutual feelings of respect and regard which animate the Governments and peoples of the two countries, so strikingly shown by the cordial welcome which is being prepared for the King on his visit to France, will year by year become stronger. It is no jealousy of any Power which compels us to spend more and more on our Fleet. So long as other fleets grow, our Fleet must grow also; but there are not wanting, I am glad to think, indications that some of our neighbours wish to call a halt in their naval expenditure. We welcome such an indication on their part, and we can assure them that, if they will adopt and adhere to such a policy, we will readily and loyally follow suit.

DEMANDS FOR CIVIL EXPENDITURE.

But it is not our expenditure on armaments alone that I view with apprehension. It seems to me that every project imaginable for increasing the burdens on the Exchequer not only finds favour in the House but is pressed by both sides on the Government, which, in return for preserving the interests of the Exchequer and preventing it from becoming a more universal milch cow than it is now, is accused of turning a deaf ear to the most useful, necessary, and praiseworthy public demands. Only the other day the Government narrowly escaped defeat because they refused to transfer half a million of money from the shipping interest to the shoulders of the taxpayer. It is demanded of us that harbours of refuge shall be constructed, and reserves of food kept; stipends for Members of this House are to be found, election expenses are to be paid, employees of the State are to be better paid, and better provision is to be made for them when they retire, and the very persons who advocate these and similar raids on the Exchequer are the first to clamour for a reduction of taxation.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: What about old age pensions?

Mr. RITCHIE: I think that is another item which might well be added to my list. I remember Mr. Gladstone in 1857 saying—

> "The country shows a greater disposition to be critical and sore on the subject of taxation than to be critical and sore on the subject of expenditure."

These words are very apt now, whatever they were at the time when Mr. Gladstone used them. I do not at all complain of the present jealousy with respect to taxation, but I do complain of the recklessness in regard to expenditure. Only by being somewhat less reckless will you be able to keep money out of the hands of the tax collector.

ESTIMATED REVENUE, 1903-4.

I now turn to the revenue on which we can reasonably reckon—taking, of course, the existing basis of taxation. May I say just one word before I come to the figures? I notice that there is some inclination to charge me with having brought pressure to bear upon the officials to raise their estimate of revenue beyond that which commends itself to them. I need hardly say that there is not the smallest foundation for any such charge. I think that any Chancellor of the Exchequer who ventured to take a step like that, and who in consequence at the end of the year had to face a deficit, would deserve the strongest condemnation. No Chancellor of the Exchequer can hope always to escape deficits, but certainly any deficit made in such a manner as that suggested is one for which no defence can be found.

I am able to estimate Customs at £36,640,000, which is £2,207,000 in excess of the receipts of 1902–3. The increase is due to three causes. Last year the receipts were unduly depleted by the clearances at the close of the year before; then I am able to expect better receipts from sugar; and this year the receipts are rather swollen by the tendency there was during the last month or two to hold back in anticipation of a remission. I take Excise at £32,700,000, which is an increase of £600,000 over last year. I take Death Duties at £13,000,000 or £550,000 less than in 1902–3 because the arrears have been all worked off. I think I may put Stamps at a rather higher figure, viz: £8,400,000; Land Tax and House Duty together are expected to yield £2,600,000, and Income Tax £39,000,000. This brings the total anticipated proceeds from taxation to £132,640,000. The non tax revenue is expected to yield £22,130,000; namely, the Post Office £15,300,000, which allows for an increase of £550,000; Telegraphs £3,800,000, which allows for an increase of £170,000; Crown Lands £445,000; Suez Canal shares, etc., £935,000, and miscellaneous revenue £1,650,000, which allows for a further falling off in the Mint receipts. Taking the revenue from taxes and the other revenue together, the total amounts to £154,770,000, and the estimated expenditure to £143,954,000, leaving an available surplus of £10,816,000.

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS.

What shall we do with it? That certainly is the most interesting portion of my task, and I think the most difficult. I think the surplus of 10¾ millions is a good deal larger than most people have expected, but it is less than one-third of the yield of the new taxes that have been imposed. I am very glad to think that the relief will be so substantial. The taxpayers of the country have borne their burden uncomplainingly. ["Hear, hear," "No, no," and laughter.] I see there are two or three Gentlemen opposite who do not agree with that statement, but I think I may say that, although the taxpayers have suffered, and suffered much, yet on the whole they have borne the taxation with equanimity, because they believed in the objects for which the taxes were required. But they are nevertheless looking forward with great anxiety to some relief from the burden of taxation, and I am glad to think that it is in my power to give it. It will be remembered that the duties on beer, spirits, tea, and tobacco have all been raised, and that new duties have been imposed on sugar, corn, and coal. These duties on commodities yielded last year £15,127,000. The Income Tax, representing the increase of direct taxation, was raised from 8d. in 1899 to 1s. 3d. last year, the extra 7d. yielding last year £18,107,000.

NECESSITY OF REDUCING INCOME TAX.

More than one-half of the war taxation has thus fallen on the Income Tax. But that does not show adequately the amount of the burden which has been borne by the Income Tax payer. If we add up the extra amount, which during the war has been contributed by the Income Tax payer, and the amount contributed by the indirect taxpayer, the amounts come out as follows: the Income Tax payer has paid £39,884,000, and the indirect taxpayer £31,962,000; so that the Committee will see that the Income Tax payer has paid nearly £8,000,000 more towards the cost of the war than has been extracted from the pockets of the indirect taxpayer.

But this, I think, does not really fully describe the extent of the burden. The indirect taxation has been spread over seven different articles, and is on this account less burdensome than the direct taxation which has all been imposed upon one subject so that the rate has been nearly doubled. It must also be remembered—what is very often forgotten in discussing these matters—that the Income Tax payer is also a very large payer of indirect taxation. When we hear people discussing the respective burdens on the direct taxpayer and on the indirect taxpayer, that fact is often lost sight of. I think, in considering the burdens which fall upon the shoulders of the taxpayer, it ought to be remembered that a very large share of the indirect taxation falls upon the direct taxpayer. I am expressing my own opinion only, but, in my opinion, the most heavily burdened person, according to his means, is the small payer of Income Tax. Therefore, I consider that the Income Tax payer has the first claim for consideration. But more than that. The importance of getting the Income Tax back to a lower figure than that at which it stands at present can hardly be exaggerated, having regard to the general interests of the country. Mr. Gladstone once said, and said truly—

> "The Income Tax is a fiscal reserve available for the defence and salvation of the country."

I quite agree, and I think everybody will agree, with that view of Mr. Gladstone's. He went on—

> "It is, therefore, necessary to get it down to a figure as speedily as possible which will enable us to raise it at any moment of sudden emergency."

May I say also that the Income Tax is more often "commandeered" than any other tax. To make up any deficit, or to meet any sudden emergency, it is the Income Tax payer who is at once called upon.

PROPOSED INQUIRY INTO INCOME TAX.

Now, Sir, I should like to say with regard to the Income Tax that I am not quite satisfied with many matters in connection with it. It is forty-two years now since an inquiry was made into it, and my own opinion is that it would be advisable that further inquiry should now be made into its incidence, the equity of the burden, its machinery, and the evasions. I am told that the evasions are very great. An illustration has been given to me by a friend of mine who is an Income Tax Commissioner. One of the most successful modes of evasion is to make no return of income, the Income Tax payer preferring to be assessed by the Commissioners. In this particular case my friend saw that a particular firm, of which he knew something, had adopted that plan, and that the Commissioners had assessed them, I think it was at something like £3,000 or £4,000. My friend said: "What, £3,000 or £4,000; that is preposterous! These people are making gigantic profits." The Commissioners replied "Then we will make it £5,000." "£5,000!" my friend said, "put it up to £55,000." The Commissioner acted upon this advice, and the tax was paid. If much of this kind of thing goes on, we who are honest [laughter]—I am one of those individuals who cannot claim much credit for being honest, because my Income Tax is taken off for me—but, however, there can be no doubt that if this practice prevails much, the just must suffer for the unjust, and there ought to be some method by which this leakage can be stopped. Probably if that were the case, we might be able to take a penny or twopence off the Income Tax and still get the same sum from Income Tax. On the other hand, there are complaints that men who have real grievances to urge are not properly attended to. I have heard it alleged as a grievance that a man has not the right to bring his solicitor or his accountant before the local Income Tax Commissioners if they withold their consent. I think there is some ground for complaint there, but I do not want to go into the various matters of complaint, and I would really say this, that I think the time has arrived when, having regard to the fact that it is likely to remain at a high sum for some years to come, we ought to have some inquiry into the operation of the tax. There is only one court of inquiry which I think would be adequate for the occasion, and that is a Committee of the House of Commons. If I find that this suggestion of mine is favourably received, I shall be very glad to act upon it, and have the inquiry made.

REDUCTION OF 4d. IN THE £.

But, Sir, what the Committee wants to know is, how much is coming off? Some people are prophesying that it is going to be a penny. [AN HON. MEMBER: "No, no."] My hon. friend says "No." Will he take 2d.? [Cries of "No."] Would he like 3d.? [Hear, hear.] Well, I propose to take off 4d. Apparently, fourpence off the Income Tax nearly absorbs the whole of my surplus, but that is not the case. A reduction is never wholly felt in the year in which it is made. I am told that the amount by which my income will be reduced by this remission in the current year is not £10,400,000, but £8,500,000. Fortunately I have a set-off in certain non-recurrent charges in the Army Votes which will provide me with sufficient funds to meet the extra deficiency which will fall upon next year. The whole amount comes to £10,400,000, and this year £8,500,000, so that there will be about £2,000,000 remaining.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): Then it will be £10,000,000 next year?

MR. RITCHIE: Taking off 4d. costs £8,500,000 this year, and nearly £2,000,000 more next year.

REMISSION OF INDIRECT TAXATION.

I have still £2,000,000 to give away, and this I propose to devote to the remission of indirect taxation. I need hardly say that there are many competing claims for this, but I think the strongest claim is that made on behalf of necessaries of life. Beer, spirits, and tobacco do not come within that category, and there remains coal, corn, sugar and tea. The Coal Tax does not fall on the consumer. [Cries of "Oh, oh."] It has not injuriously affected the quantity of exports, and I do not propose to interfere with that. There remain sugar, tea, and corn. Sugar has undoubted claims. If it cannot be called an actual necessary of life it is very near it, but to reduce that duty by one half would cost £3,000,000, and I have not got £3,000,000 to spare. My choice, then, is limited to tea and corn. Now tea, Sir, has many attractions: it is the easiest and least contentious subject of taxation, but it cannot be said to be dear. Nor do I think that a duty of 6d. on tea is very excessive or hard to bear. Tea is not strictly a necessary of life. ["Oh, oh."] Mr. Gladstone at one time spoke of tea and sugar as being harmless and beneficial articles. I am not sure that some people do not take too much of them, but one thing is certain, that the tea duty is not a tax on raw material.

REPEAL OF CORN DUTY.

Now, Sir, corn is a necessary of life in a greater degree than any other article. It is a raw material, it is the food of our people, the food of our horses, and of our cattle; and, moreover, the duty has a certain disadvantage inasmuch as it is inelastic; and what is much worse, it lends itself very readily to misrepresentation. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I do not think it can remain permanently an integral portion of our fiscal system, unless there is some radical change in our economic circumstances or it is connected with some boon much desired by the working classes. It was the last tax that was imposed by my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I know it was imposed with reluctance and only under pressing necessity. In my opinion, being, as it is, a tax on a prime necessity of life, it has the first claim to be associated with the large remission of the Income Tax of which I have spoken. I therefore propose to remit the Corn Duty. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I made a promise to the trade that if I did this I would give suitable notice. I propose, therefore, that the repeal shall take effect on the

1st of July and in the meantime bonding facilities will be allowed. The loss for a full year would be £2,400,000.

FINAL BALANCE SHEET, 1903-4.

My estimated surplus is thus disposed of: £8,500,000 Income Tax, £2,000,000 Corn, £10,500,000 together; and this deducted from my surplus leaves me a margin of £316,000. I am now in a position to state my final balance sheet. The revenue, with the proposed alterations, will be as follows: Customs, £34,640,000; Excise, £32,700,000; Death Duties, £13,300,000; Stamps, £8,400,000: Land Tax and House Duty, £2,600,000; Property and Income Tax, £30,500,000; making a total tax revenue of £122,440,000; to which I add a non-tax revenue of £22,130,000, bringing the total revenue to £144,270,000. Now the expenditure to be set on the other side is as follows: Consolidated Fund services, £29,919,000; and Supply services, £114,035,000, making together £143,954,000, leaving a margin for contingencies of £316,000. I have now completed my task, and I thank the Committee most sincerely for the attentive and kindly hearing they have given me. I rejoice to think that my first Budget is not associated with imposition of taxation, but with remission of taxation. I propose to remit the duty which, small though it is, affects the greatest necessary of life. I have proposed a still larger reduction of direct taxation by taking 4d. off the Income Tax, and yet I have left the proportion of direct to indirect taxation higher than it was before the war. Besides this I am going to ask the House to strengthen the Sinking Fund, in view of our increasing liabilities, and in view of the present price of Consols. These are my proposals, and I confidently submit them to the judgment of the Committee, claiming for them not only that they proceed on sound and simple lines, but also that they benefit all classes, both rich and poor.

CUSTOMS—TEA.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Customs duty now charged on tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say):—

Tea . . . the pound Six pence."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman in commencing his speech made an appeal to the sympathy of the House. It has been said that nothing so much commands human sympathy as a good man struggling with adversity. I am quite sure that the House has thoroughly appreciated the ability, the clearness, and the straightforwardness of the statement which the right hon. Gentleman has made. It would not be at all appropriate, nor would it be usual, to go into a great number of matters with which the right hon. Gentleman has so fully and so ably dealt. They will require careful examination. What he has said on the subject of Consols I think many people will not entirely agree with, but the figures and the arguments he has presented are such that they require to be carefully examined. At one time it was said that we were going to be ruined by the high price of the public securities. I ventured on that occasion to say that that was a danger of which we were likely to be relieved by the present Administration, and they have fulfilled that prediction. I never can think myself that when we want money—as we have wanted money, and as we are going to want money—it is a good thing that we should get so very much less than we should charge upon posterity in the price of Consols. But there are one or two subjects and one or two facts which, I think, after what I may call the cheerful optimistic tone of the right hon. Gentleman, require consideration. One of these is not the relief of taxation which he has given, but the taxation that remains in excess of that which existed before the war. I am not going back as far as the right hon. Gentleman has gone back for a comparison of the condition of the people. He seemed to think it was a great point to have made, that we are only paying per head of the population a very little more——[The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: A little less.]—or, rather, a little less than was paid per head of the population at the conclusion of the French War. I was going to say, God help us if that is so! What was the condition of the people after the French War under the burden of the debt that had been created? That condition, and the depression of the people consequent on the taxation which was imposed, are horrible to think of. The real thing to ask, and what the House must ask, and what the country will ask, is this: How much more are you going to pay in taxation now than you did four years ago? The increase in the taxation of the country is £40,000,000, and what are you going to take off? You are going to take off £10,000,000. The consequence is that the residuum you have is £30,000,000 of increase of taxation, not due to the war at all, but due to the normal increase in the country's expenditure. In 1898 the taxation of the country was £99,000,000. This year it is £140,000,000, an increase of £41,000,000. Upon that you are going to make a reduction of £10,000,000. The consequence is that the country is saddled with an addition of £30,000,000 as compared with the taxation that existed in 1898. Now, Sir, why? What is the justification of raising £30,000,000 more from the people of this country than you did four years ago? That is a question to which the right hon. Gentleman has not addressed any part of his remarks. If you go back again to the last years of the last Liberal Administration there is a difference of £47,000,000. You have taken off from that £10,000,000, and therefore there remains an increase of £37,000,000 upon the normal expenditure of this country. The Secretary to the Board of Trade went down to his constituents at Leeds the other day and said he was not prepared to admit that the Government had imposed on the nation a greater burden than the nation could with comparative ease bear. In my view that is not the opinion of the nation at all, and it is not the opinion of the nation that there is any justification for having raised the normal taxation of the country in the space of four years by £30,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman made use of one sentence which was very interesting, and upon which I think we ought to have some further information. He said, addressing the Parliamentary Committee of the Co-operative Congress—who represented 1,600 societies, paid £500,000 a year in sugar, and £400,000 in corn stuffs—that people complained of the great expenditure. He then went on to say that, while everybody complained of the great expenditure of the country, he hoped he saw his way to a substantial reduction of expenditure, but that he would very much like to know where the deputation would begin to reduce taxation. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not wish to enter into any argument upon that subject, but that great numbers of people contended that the Army cost too much and ought to be reduced. No one, he added, could more heartily wish that the cost of the Army should be reduced than he, and he was not without hope that it might be reduced. I hope that before we part with the Finance Bill we shall know what are the foundations of that hope. We should very much like to know what reduction on this £30,000,000 of extra taxation the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer hopes to make, what foundation he has for entertaining such a hope, and how far the Secretary of State for War concurs in that expectation. We ought to have some specific information on that subject, because I believe that desire exists largely in this House and still more largely in the nation. It is no use for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make general statements of that kind unless he is able to show what it is that he expects or hopes for in the reduction of expenditure, of which he held forth a prospect.

Now, Sir, there is a point which must be challenged at once, and it is in reference to direct and indirect taxation. That is a subject which will occupy the attention of the nation, and which ought to occupy the attention of this House. How does this question of direct and indirect taxation stand? In the days far back, before the imposition of the Income Tax, nothing could be more unjust than the taxation of this country. Almost the whole burden of that taxation fell upon the consuming classes, and the Income Tax was introduced for the purpose of relieving that unjust burden. The truth is, Sir, that all taxation—nobody can deny the fact—comes out of income; but the income of three parts of the people consists of their wages. Therefore the taxes must fall upon the income of the working classes. What has the right hon. Gentleman told us only this afternoon? He has told us that this year wages have been falling, that the produce of the Income Tax has been rising and rising every year; therefore the greater part of the relief has been given to that class whose condition is obviously improving, and not given to the class whose income he admits is falling. I did not exactly follow the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman. I find, from a valuable return of my right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton, that in 1880 the total revenue from taxation was £69,000,000. At that time the Customs and Excise, which you may take generally to represent articles of consumption, was £44,500,000, and direct taxation £24,000,000. Ever since that time it has been the policy of the Finance Minister of this country to equalise the burden of direct and indirect taxation. That has been the consistent policy of this country. It was felt to be unjust that the great masses of the people should pay a larger amount than wealthier and better-to-do people. No man earning under £160 a year—that is, no man belonging to the working or wage-earning classes—will derive one farthing benefit from £8,000,000 of the £10,000,000 reduction; no man earning £3 a week and under will derive any advantage whatever from four-fifths of the sum you are now giving away in regard to Income Tax. Since the Finance Act of 1894 came into full operation it has been the consistent policy of the Finance Minister of this country to reach to and to maintain an equality between direct and indirect taxation. When the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1900 made proposals for increased taxation he said—

> "During the last five years the proportion by which our revenue has been derived from direct and indirect taxation has not materially varied. There has been no material variation. I think these proportions are fair, and I do not agree with those persons who would desire to upset them largely on either side, and I think that in the taxation which we now propose we should endeavour as far as may be that these proportions should not be materially altered."

That was an acceptance of the principle of equality between direct and indirect taxation as the continued policy in finance of both Parties in this country. We hear a great deal of continuity of policy, but this Budget is a reversal of the financial policy of this country in this most material particular. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook to follow out that principle of continuity of equality between the two classes of taxation, and he did it in the most rigorously just manner. In 1901 he imposed Income Tax to the amount of £9,700,000, and indirect taxes to the amount of £6,000,000. In the next year he imposed Income Tax amounting to £5,000,000 and indirect taxes amounting to £8,200,000.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Including the Coal Tax.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the right hon. Gentleman chooses to deduct £2,000,000 from that I do not agree with him, nor do the miners of this country, either in the North or the South, agree with him. They are of opinion that the tax has had a most injurious effect upon their trade, and it has in point of fact injured their wages, and therefore I do not think that it ought to be struck out. But just let us reserve that £2,000,000. Last year the right hon. Gentleman imposed an Income Tax of £2,000,000 and a Corn Tax of £2,650,000.

*Mr. RITCHIE: The Income Tax was £2,600,000.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: That was not so estimated by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. He estimated for £2,000,000, and the extra £600,000 was not expected to be collected in the year. That makes a total of direct taxation £16,700,000, and of indirect taxation £16,800,000, subject to what has been said about the Coal Tax. Therefore there was £100,000 more indirect than direct taxes imposed. If you choose to strike the Coal Tax out, you will find that, substantially, the amount of direct and indirect taxation raised since the war, and for the war, was as nearly as possible, even. Out of the whole revenue of last year I find that Customs were £34,650,000 and Excise £32,600,000, and I add to that £1,000,000 of Excise out of the local fund for beer and spirits. The direct taxation was, Income Tax £38,800,000, Estate Duties £18,000,000, Stamps £8,200,000, and Land Tax and House Tax £2,500,000. Therefore, the total of direct taxation was £67,500,000, and that of indirect taxation £67,250,000. That shows that on the present basis the two systems of taxation were as near as possible on an equality. At the end of the war you come with a Peace Budget, and under those circumstances, having £10,000,000, and leaving an additional burden of taxation on this country of £30,000,000 as compared with the state of things before the war, when you distribute that £10,000,000 you give £8,000,000 to the well-to-do classes and only £2,000,000 to the working classes. I say that is scandalously unjust. That principle cannot be defended and will not be accepted. I envy the sense of humour with which the right hon. Gentleman announced the abandonment of the Corn Duty, remembering the arguments that were adduced in its support when it was introduced. When we remember the profound economic demonstrations of the Prime Minister as to those upon whom the incidence of this tax would fall, and how he held us up to scorn for maintaining that this was a tax which by any possibility could fall upon the consumers——

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I never said that.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I recollect very well these arguments, and it would take some time to have them read by the Clerk at the Table. I say there is nothing more ludicrous than the situation of the Government in first fighting for this Corn Tax, as they fought last year, and now coming forward and saying that its repeal will be a great boon, and the only boon which they will give to the consumers of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer used a phrase which was amusing. He said it was a tax that was liable to misrepresentation. We all know very well what that means. After all, by-elections are a valuable institution, and all the profound political economy of the Prime Minister has been refuted, and he is, I presume, a convert in consequence of the by-elections.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really think that if the right hon. Gentleman is going on quoting my words he might quote them accurately. He is not representing anything I said in this House. Perhaps he will read my words if he has my speeches there.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If I had guessed that this sacred tax would be taken off I should have brought a pile of *Hansards* which would have demonstrated that it was a tax which would under no circumstances ever be abandoned by a Conservative Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, do not say that I said it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I only regret the absence of an hon. Member on the other side who on that occasion ejaculated "Well done." Now the Chancellor of the Exchequer says it is to be undone. I am very glad that the Corn Tax has been repealed. It was an infamous tax. The Government have at last been persuaded by the nation to take that view of the subject. I say that we take issue with the Government, and shall continue to do so, both here and elsewhere, upon the question of the unjust disproportion in dealing with this £10,000,000. There is one other thing which I should like to call attention to. Having said that you are left now with £30,000,000 more of taxation than the country was paying before the war, I should like to point out that this is the last remission that you have any present prospect of receiving. That is the important point. What the House has got to consider very carefully before this Budget is passed is, what are the prospects of a greater economy and less expenditure, and what are the prospects of a greater revenue? If there are no such prospects, there can be no prospect of further remission. As far as I understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer's remarks in reference to dealing with the Sinking Fund, they do not seem to me to be satisfactory. He said he was going to make the Sinking Fund proportionate to the debt. People speak of the capital. The National Debt is not a capital sum. It is an annuity payable every year. The right hon. Gentleman gave some figures of what was expected to be done in future years towards the repayment of the National Debt. If I caught his figures aright the sums he will appropriate to this purpose will be less than those which have been so applied on the average for many years past. In many years as much as £7,000,000 was paid in discharge of the debt. I think it will be found that there is no real addition to the sum appropriated to the extinction of the debt before the debt was increased. Is there any prospect of reduced expenditure? When your six Army Corps are fully developed, will they cost less than they are costing now? I imagine not. I believe that the development of the new system will be more, and not less, expensive than the present system. Are we to cease to pay for the Army in South Africa? Why should we not? Why should not South Africa pay for the Army there as India pays for the Army in India? Why should not this great wealth, which we are always told about but do not always see, discharge the cost of the Army in South Africa? But there is not much prospect of it. Then what is the prospect of a diminution of the charges for the Navy? The right hon. Gentleman made the usual flourish about the Navy to which we are accustomed. But it is rather curious that I received this morning a pamphlet from one who is a high authority on this subject—I mean Lord Brassey. He says—

> "The British Navy Estimates for 1903–04 amount to £34,457,000, as against £31,225,000 in the previous year. Heavy expenditure for warlike preparation is a strange sequel to the conclusion of peace."

You would have thought that that was said by some miserable Little Englander. Lord Brassey is not a Little Englander but a Great Englander.

> "The policy on which we have entered is not the policy on which the great statesmen of the past—Lord Beaconsfield not less earnestly than Mr. Gladstone—insisted. Our expenditure has grown beyond all precedent, and is not to be borne without detriment to the national progress and prosperity."

Then Lord Brassey proceeds to give in detail a demonstration of the unnecessary extravagance which is now going on in naval expenditure.

I can see no prospect whatever of diminution in your expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman has truly said that he wants a great deal more money for domestic purposes and for all sorts of reforms at home. But we never know from day to day what rash new enterprises we may be embarking on; what entangling alliances, which you take up one day and find it difficult to drop the next, and which involve you in wholly unforeseen expenditure. What prospect is there of relief in any other quarter? You perorate about the Empire; but it is not the Empire that pays. It is Little England that pays. I know there has been an attempt to induce the Empire to pay; but the Empire does not see it. The Colonial Secretary has made most pathetic appeals, with tears in his voice, to the Colonies one after another. His sermons have been excellent, eloquent, and pathetic. But the contributions to the plate have been small. The cost of the defence of the Empire is £64,000,000 a year. What do we receive towards that from the rest of the Empire? I am quite sure it does not amount to half-a-million. What has been the response of the Colonial Conference to these appeals? It is a very remarkable fact that while those appeals are printed in full the answers are not given. But the answers are to be found in the fact of the contributions; and I am afraid that those contributions of the Empire have passed into the wallet of disappointed hopes. Australia is not at present in a financial position, however much she may desire it, to make great contributions; and Canada, the most flourishing of all our possessions, takes a view which I cannot find it in my heart to condemn. She says through Sir Wilfred Laurier, that she does not wish to embark on unlimited militarism. As to the contribution of £30,000,000 from the Transvaal, at present it is rather a bird in the bush. Talking of revenue per head which is collected by other countries as compared with this country. In the United Kingdom in 1902, about £3 5s. per head was collected, in France, £3 15s., in Germany, £3 15s., and in the United States £2 15s. The United States are in a different category. They boast, and justly boast, that they enjoy immunity from many of the burdens which the older European nations are liable to. These figures excluded local charges. In the case of Germany we have to add the charges in the various States, and that would also apply to the United States. These figures are not very disquieting. We collected £3 5s. per head, while both France and Germany had collected £3 15s. These figures, and the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, show that there is no justification for alarmist views of our national finances. I would rather say they show, if anything, that we might apply the analogy of a great business, and that it is necessary and proper to keep up our great expenditure if our business is to be kept up to date. The Government in pursuing the policy of increasing expenditure upon armaments and upon other necessary things, such as education, is only pursuing a wise and cautious policy which every employer of labour and every business man would pursue. The Government is following the methods of business men by increasing and improving its methods to suit the times, not being afraid to incur more expenditure in order to reap great and lasting benefits.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): Whatever feelings we may entertain towards the Budget the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has produced, there is one thing with which I think we shall all agree and rejoice in, and that is the business-like and moderate fashion in which he made his statement and the clear desire for economy and improvement which dominated the entirety of his speech. We on this side of the House feel a greater affinity towards the right hon. Gentleman than we do to some of his colleagues, and we feel we should like to see more of his spirit prevailing in the measures of the Government than has prevailed in the past, and if we have to take exception to not one but many things in the Budget he has produced, it is because we feel that the hand which framed the Budget has not throughout been the hand of the right hon. Gentleman. The broad feature which has attracted attention in this House, and will attract attention in the country, is the one on which my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth put his hand. Surely it is extraordinary that in a year of an unexpectedly large amount of surplus, you should dispose of the surplus in the proportion of five to one to remedy the grievance of the direct taxpayers, instead of relieving the indirect taxpayers to an equal extent. I am quite aware of the argument that you should look on your Income Tax as a national resource—something to be husbanded; that you should look upon it not only as the war chest, but as the resource fund of the nation for many other purposes. That is true, but there is a broader view which cannot be lost sight of after you have imposed an exceptional amount of taxation, and are approaching a relief of this kind; you ought to have some clear view of the relative positions of the various classes you are seeking to relieve. The right hon. Gentleman gave us some figures of the payment of Income Tax, and, according to those figures, the position of the Income Taxpayers is a remarkable one, inasmuch as a very small number of people raise a great deal of money. But the right hon. Gentleman touched upon another topic, and that was the character of the national income. He said the amount of the national income was difficult and almost impossible to obtain, unless you had the figures of the direct taxpayer. But the national income has been estimated; various estimates have been made of it, all of which have converged within large limits to one amount. The national income has never been put lower than £1,500,000,000 and it has been put as high as £1,700,000,000. If we take it at £1,600,000,000, that is owned to the extent of about £800,000,000 by the Income Tax payers. The Income Tax payers are a comparatively small class; they are only 4,000,000 people out of a population of 42,000,000. These

4,000,000 persons hold half the national income, and therefore it seems to me that if you take as a standard the ability to bear taxation into consideration at all, the Income Tax payer has certainly not the first claim to anything like the extent of reduction which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has proposed—half the national income, £800,000,000, among some 4,000,000 people.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): No, families. Perhaps 20,000,000 persons.

MR. HALDANE: Well, families. Take it as you will, it seems to me an extraordinary state of things that this small section, taking half the whole income of the country, is to get the benefit of the remission of taxation that the right hon. Gentleman proposes in the proportion of five to one. Before this is carried out, we certainly ought to have all the figures clearly before us and inquire very carefully into the ability to bear taxation. While I am bound to make these criticisms on the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman, there is another thing to which I am coming which it gives me great pleasure to admire, and that is the sum which he has set aside as the fixed charge for the extinction of the National Debt in the future. £27,000,000 is a very satisfactory and substantial sum; it is an increase of £4,000,000. We had £23,000,000 before on the old National Debt and we have now £27,000,000 on the National Debt as it stands at this moment. If my estimate is not wrong that should pay off the whole debt in a half century from now. I am quite aware that it is a very sanguine view which presupposes that we shall stick to the proportion of £27,000,000 for fifty years, but I do say that that is a standard we should set before the nation as part of our continuous policy not to be departed from as Government succeeds Government, and if we do that we shall see our National Debt disappear in the time that I have indicated. But while it is a good feature that there should have been an increase in the charge for the extinction of the National Debt to the extent of £4,000,000 a year I am not able to take quite the sanguine view that the right hon. Gentleman has taken as to our relative financial position as compared with other nations or the view taken by the hon. Member who spoke last. It is quite true that £27,000,000 is a substantial fixed charge for the payment of our National Debt, but as regards the debt itself I think we stand in a much worse position than most of the great Powers. Most of the other great Powers have a debt represented by some form of substantial assets, such as State Railways, which they own—I am not speaking of France which is in a more difficult position than ourselves in that respect, but as regards some of the Powers the situation is different. Let us for instance take the case of Germany. The German Empire has an Imperial debt of about £121,000,000 which it is true is not represented by any asset, but the State debts are always represented by a substantial form of assets. The State debt of Prussia is £336,000,000, but the State Railway of Prussia, out of which the State makes a large profit, pays more than is necessary for that debt. Even in the case of Russia, which has a National Debt which is estimated at £700,000,000, the Government own over 23,000 miles of railway, a most substantial asset for that debt. In this country we own no assets except perhaps the Suez Canal shares. Ours is sheer debt, and that is the thing which differentiates us from Germany and Russia. France is in a worse position than we are. They have a National Debt of over £1,200,000,000, represented by no substantial assets, and there is a fixed charge for that of £47,000,000, which contrasts very favourably with our £27,000,000. The United States are reducing their debt rapidly. The Federal debt in 1865 was £531,000,000, to-day it is reduced to £190,000,000. Therefore it is that I say although we are paying our debt, we are paying it none too soon, and therefore I cannot take the sanguine view taken by the right hon. Gentleman as to our financial position.

It is true that we hold a very strong position, but if we are to retain our place in the comity of nations it must be assured that we shall continue to hold the position we have, and to do that you have to improve the quality of the people and to spend more money on education than you are doing at the present time. That is one item I should have liked to have seen increased very substantially, in a rational manner, and I hope to see it figure in the Budgets of years to come as a very substantially increased item. It is all very well to speak of our being in a very substantial position, as the hon. Gentleman who spoke last suggested, but we must be assured that that position will be maintained. We have to look to the future, and we cannot be sure that the enormous advantages which we have reaped in the past, and which have given us the monopoly of the commercial supremacy of the world, will continue. We have competition growing up in every land; a new spirit entering into other nations, and, in my opinion, the duty which lies on us most heavily is to pay off debt as rapidly as possible. I trust we have now entered into some sort of policy of economy in some directions. I was struck with the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his references to the expenditure which this country is at present making on the Army, and I cannot draw any other inference from it than that the Government have made up their minds that the policy adumbrated this session will have to be, and ought to be, much curtailed, and that it refers to other views which did not prevail in the debates which took place recently, but which will, I trust, show themselves very markedly in the debates which will take place in the near future. The Government seem to realise that they have placed themselves in a wrong position—indeed, it almost looks as if they anticipate that they may have to submit themselves to the judgment of the country at no distant date. The right hon. Gentleman's Budget struck me as being somewhat of an electioneering Budget. But there is another side to the Budget, and I feel more and more as the Budget is reflected upon, that more and more it will be felt that the indirect taxpayers of this country have not had justice done to them.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): In many respects I listened with great pleasure to the statement of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but while I heard with approval many parts of his speech, such, for instance, as those dealing with the reduction of the debt and the disposition of the greater part of the surplus, there was one of his proposals to which it is only fair and right I should say at once I am absolutely opposed. I find myself agreeing very much with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite as to the position of a Government who, after all they have done and all they said last year, now come forward and deliberately repeal a tax which, on their own statements, repeated over and over again, could not possibly injure anybody, and which was avowedly imposed for the purpose of broadening the basis of taxation. Lest there should be the slightest doubt as to the accuracy of my statement, let me remind the Committee of a few sentences which fell from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in introducing the Budget last year. He pointed out how great had been the tendency to increase expenditure, and he said—

> "I went so far as to say that in my judgment if that rate of increase continued the country must come within reach of actual financial ruin."

He proceeded to take measures which he thought were adequate to the circumstances of the time. He said—

> "Looking to the ever-increasing demands made upon the Exchequer flowing from our modern civilisation, we must expect some increase in our expenditure in years to come. I am therefore endeavouring now, as I endeavoured last year when I asked the Committee to raise additional taxation in order to meet the charges of the war, so to frame that taxation that when peace returns and it is possible also to return to ordinary expenditure, we may have no difficulty in settling our financial system on a basis which would be equitable to all payers of taxation in the country. Therefore, in seeking for new indirect taxation, what I desire to find, as I desired to find last year, is an article of practically universal consumption, from which therefore a large revenue can be produced to the Exchequer without any injurious or oppressive burden on any individual or on any class. My primary duty is to look for revenue, and my ideal of a tax is that which will yield the most revenue with the least injury and inconvenience to the community."

He then referred to the old registration duty on corn, and after using a great variety of arguments, he proved conclusively that in his opinion that was the least injurious tax which could be imposed for the purpose of providing an increase of revenue, and made it the chief feature of his Budget. The right hon. Gentleman was more than justified, and is more than justified by the results which are before us at this moment, in all that he said with regard to the infliction of the smallest possible injury upon any class of the community. It was only yesterday that I received the monthly statement which is circulated by the Board of Trade under the auspices of the Government—of which my right hon. friend ought to know as much as anybody in this House—I mean the *Labour Gazette*, and there I find in black and white that in more than one of the towns in the North of England the prices of bread and wheat are at present both lower than they were before the imposition of the tax. Why does my right hon. friend do this? He says it is because he wants to do something for the consumer. By the repeal of this tax he will do nothing whatever for the consumer. He will not affect or change his position by one iota. If he thinks he is going to lower the price of bread he will be just as much mistaken as were hon. Gentlemen opposite when they said last year that the imposition of the duty would permanently raise the price. If he really wanted to do something for the consumer it is patent to everybody how he could have done it. He had £2,000,000 to dispose of. The present duty on tea is 6d. What did it produce last year? The actual figures for 1901–02 are £5,792,967. If my right hon. friend, wishing to do something for the consumer, had devoted his £2,000,000 to the reduction of the duty on tea he might have reduced it by nearly one half, and thus have done something which would have been of substantial interest and use to the consumer. What does my right hon. friend expect to gain by this? What have the Government got in their minds? What are their supporters going to gain? So far from gaining the respect, I think they will gain what they fully merit, the ridicule of their opponents, and, unless I am very much mistaken, they will arouse the resentment—I do not like to say the contempt—of thousands of their friends in all parts of the country. Of their friends and supporters in this House, whom they seem to forget, by their present attitude they are making fools; they are making absolute fools of them in the eyes of the country by all that they deliberately took them through last session. Now, when all is over, when they have got a large revenue from the tax which was imposed for the purpose of broadening the basis of taxation for all time without inflicting the smallest injury upon a single member of the community, for some reason, known only to themselves, they throw away the whole of these advantages, and at the same time deprive the consumer of a real and substantial benefit which they could have given him by reducing the duty on tea by one half. I confess that it has seemed to me sometimes lately that the Government were going through the operation known as deliberately riding for a fall, and I must say of this last act of theirs, that if that fall should be thereby precipitated, I, for one, should consider that they most heartily deserved it. I am perfectly sincere in making these observations, though I make them with real regret, because, as I said just now, I listened with great approval to the greater part of the statement of my right hon. friend, and also because I honestly believe that his conclusion will have the effect of converting into a fiasco what I, and many others in this House and elsewhere, think would otherwise have been a most excellent Budget. I am sure of this, that it will be regarded by countless friends of the Government as an act of financial folly and weakness which has seldom, if ever, been equalled.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): It is impossible not to sympathise with the indignation expressed by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. He is the one strong and consistent man on the other side. The arguments he has now stated are the arguments we listened to last year, and though we did not then agree with him, he was received with cheers on his own side of the House, and was supported in the lobby. How hon. Members opposite can fail to support him now I do not understand. But I rose more particularly to say something on the subject of the Sinking

Fund. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the beginning of his observations, rather represented that he was going to strengthen the Sinking Fund, and he spoke of that as a most desirable object. To our infinite astonishment, when he came to actual figures, we found that so far from strengthening the fund he was reducing the amount provided by his predecessor last year. On June 4 last, when the late Chancellor of the Exchequer restored the Sinking Fund, he re-established the fixed debt charge at the figure of £23,000,000 a year. That fixed charge was for the purpose of meeting the interest on the old debt and the Sinking Fund on the whole of the debt. The interest on the new debt which has been incurred on account of the war did not come out of the fixed charge. That interest last year reached the sum of £4,500,000, and had to be added to the £23,000,000, so that the actual provision made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Sinking Fund and the payment of interest was £27,500,000. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was full of pious expressions as to the advantage of large purchases of Consols in the open market, and the need of our paying off the debt, instead of increasing that amount, as the late Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested should be done, has actually reduced the amount by £500,000. An hon. Member opposite spoke of the exceeding prosperity of this country. It is true that certain classes are exceedingly prosperous, and I would ask whether there is any better way in which some of the surplus of our prosperity could be used than in paying off our great National Debt. Let me remind the Committee of what took place in 1899, when the late Chancellor of the Exchequer reduced the fixed charge of the debt from £25,000,000 to £23,000,000 a year. At that time the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained that in a very few years the interest on the Debt would be lowered, and that a large number of the then existing terminable annuities would cease to have to be paid; and he showed that in a very few years there would be £9,000,000 a year available for the Sinking Fund. That, he said, was too much, and he was going to take out of the hands of future Chancellors of the Exchequer the temptation to invade the Sinking Fund, and he therefore created a large new block of terminable annuities, and reduced the amount of the fixed debt charge. He held the Sinking Fund should be an annual sum, more or less the same over succeeding years for the reduction of the debt. The amount he provided then was for the reduction of a debt which was £150,000,000 less than it stands at to-day. The amount then left was £5,800,000 a year, and he told us at that time that he was happy to say, that being the minimum, that as years went by that amount would be increased. He did not wish to see it increased to such a large amount as £9,000,000, but what has the present Chancellor of the Exchequer done? With a much larger debt than the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with in 1899 he has reduced this provision.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell Peckham): The hon. Member has forgotten the reduction in Consols.

*MR. MCKENNA: No, I have not forgotten that, for that was one of the reasons the late Chancellor of the Exchequer gave in fixing a reduced amount. Now, upon a larger debt the right hon. Gentleman proposes to reduce the amount of the fixed debt charge still further. It is true that the amount is nominally to be increased from £23,000,000 to £27,000,000, but as I have shown already under the old fixed debt charge the interest on the new war debt would not have been included. He has therefore added £4,500,000 a year to the liabilities on the fixed debt charge, and has not increased the amount of the fixed debt charge, as he should have done if he had left it in the same position as it was under the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whether the right hon. Gentleman be right or wrong in his policy, he must not take credit to himself for having made an added provision for the reduction of the National Debt. The hon. Member for Exeter has been asking that a new and additional Sinking Fund should be created for the reduction of the war debt of £160,000,000, but the right hon. Gentleman has not done that; on the contrary, he has actually reduced the amount which was provided last year by his predecessor by £500,000. I do not know whether the hon. Member will be satisfied with the exchange, but I certainly say that in making this change the right hon. Gentleman has not, I think, acted the part he should have done. The right hon. Gentleman is, I submit to the Committee, more or less bound to the pledge made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer on June 4th of last year, and he is bound by that pledge, if he does anything at all, to increase the old fixed debt charge. Instead of that he has reduced it by half a million. That to my mind is one great objection to the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. It has been pointed out with very great force that the right hon. Gentleman, for every £5 he has taken off taxation, has given £4 to the classes who are admitted to be well off, and only £1 in relief of taxation to the classes who we know, from the Returns he has given, are less well off now than they have been in previous years. But quite apart from that, ought not the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he comes to reduce taxation, to have given us some inquiry as to the actual amount of taxation which is borne by the working classes in this country? What does the man with 30s. a week pay? In answer to a recent deputation the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that owing to the extended franchise it was only right the working classes, who had a share in the Government, should also bear a share in the payment of the taxation of the country.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Yes, in a tangible form.

*Mr. McKENNA: They do pay a share in a most tangible form. That is the great misunderstanding on the opposite side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman may not know the small items of his household expenditure. Personally, I do not know when the price of the articles which are taxed goes up or down—I am alluding to the price of bread, beer, tea, sugar, spirits, and wines. I do not know the fluctuations in the prices of these articles, and no more do the majority, I believe, of hon. Members in this House. But for the working classes a rise or fall in the price of these articles is a most tangible fact, and they feel every week the sums they have to pay through the rise in prices. Ought the right hon. Gentleman to be content with mere percentages of the amounts paid in direct and indirect taxation, or ought he not to tell us what a working man with 30s. a week does actually pay in taxation? I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman will find that under this Budget a man earning 30s. a week pays more than one-twentieth part of what is paid by a man earning £30 a week. I do not know what principle of taxation would be acceptable to hon. Gentlemen opposite, but I do say that I do not believe there is a single hon Member in this House who would go less far than this—that a man with 30s. a week ought not to pay a larger proportion of his income than a man with £30 or £300 a week. I think he ought to pay a much less proportion. I think there is a minimum amount necessary for living which ought not to be subjected to taxation at all. Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the Committee what is the proportion of income which a working man earning 30s. a week pays and what the man with £30 or £300 a week pays. I have gone into some figures, and so far as I can judge of the expenditure from reading a number of budgets of the working classes on 30s. a week, and comparing them with incomes of £30 a week, I have been driven to the conclusion that a man with 30s. a week pays a larger proportion of his income in taxation than the man with £30 a week. If that is true is it not a crime for those who have control of the taxation of this country to take taxes off the rich and leave them on the poor? I would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who will have plenty of opportunities, and who has unrivalled means at his disposal for considering this question, to give the House upon some future date an estimate of this description, which he can make with the greatest accuracy. We have thousands of specimen budgets of working men, and if he will make a comparison of the taxation borne by working classes and by the wealthier classes he will be able at a later stage in the course of these proceedings to tell the House whether justice has been done to the working classes or not. Whether the backbone of the right hon. Gentleman's Party will be dissatisfied or not I do not know, but I believe that those who are most clamorous for the reduction of the Income Tax would consent to a smaller reduction of that tax in order to take their fair share of the burdens off the shoulders of those poorer than themselves, and who are far more heavily burdened at the present time by taxation.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I should like to say a few words, because I have taken a very great interest in the subject of taxation as affecting the two classes of the community. It is perfectly true, and I do not think anybody can deny it, that the ordinary man who consumes a reasonable amount of alcohol, and earns £1 a week or so, does pay a larger proportion of his income in taxation than the richer man. I do not think that argument can be got over at all. But, Sir, the conclusion, and the only conclusion, to be drawn from that is that you must remodel the whole system of your taxation, and you must alter the system of taxing alcohol. As long as you do tax alcohol to the enormous extent that you do the working man earning small wages and drinking a reasonable amount will continue to pay an undue share of taxation in proportion to his richer neighbour. But surely no sane man with the welfare of the country at heart, in order to establish a system that theoretically would be absolutely fair, would do away with the taxation on alcohol; yet that is the only solution of the particular difficulty of which the hon. Member complained. If you are theoretically to tax every man strictly in proportion to his earnings, you must do away with the tax on alcohol. As long as you have a system under which you derive an enormous taxation from alcohol, the greater part of which must be paid by the working classes from their present modes of living, I say that it is absurd to attempt a theoretical system with absolute fairness. But we cannot solve this matter simply upon these grounds. A good many years ago I endeavoured to get out the budgets of a number of persons, and I came to the conclusion that ignoring alcohol the man who paid a larger proportion of his income than any other class was the small man who paid IncomeTax. He is the man more hardly hit than anybody else. I could not help being struck with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last but one, in which he said that the Income Tax payers were a small class of the community. He said that only 4,000,000 paid Income Tax, but we must remember that those 4,000,000 are, practically speaking, 4,000,000 families, which makes a large difference in the calculation. Taking the average family at five, it means 20,000,000, and although there may be some instances in which two members of a family pay Income Tax, those instances are very few. I think you may take it that, roughly speaking 20,000,000 persons are concerned in the payment of Income Tax. Those who have studied the Income Tax returns must have come to the conclusion that the great bulk of the increase of Income Tax payers is at the bottom of the scale. The number of people who are getting into the class of Income Tax payers is ever increasing, and there is no more hopeful sign of the prosperity of the country. It seems to me that that is a reason why they should be considered as a class. In the last three or four years these persons have suffered very severely; they have suffered more than any others, and it does seem to me that it is a most reasonable thing that they should be relieved first. Mr Gladstone always held that Income Tax payers should be relieved, and that Income Tax should be regarded as a sort of reserve. But if you maintain it at 11d. you can hardly say that it is a reserve. The tax should be reduced for the safety of the country, and certainly in fairness to those who pay it.

My right hon. friend behind me has objected to the remission of the duty on corn. I should like to state candidly my opinion upon that. I am placed in this difficulty. We have heard, and I agree with the statement, that this tax does not fall with any hardship on anybody. This was the argument for it two or three years ago. I myself do not believe that it affects the price of bread one bit, and, that being so, I cannot see that it is very wise to make an alteration in it.

I wish to see the basis of taxation widened, and I would much prefer that some other indirect taxation had been taken off. However, I think it is fair that the payers of indirect taxation should have some advantage, and therefore I suppose we must agree to this. But it is a little difficult to understand why the repeal of a tax which two years ago did not affect anybody should now be regarded as a boon. The other subject I should like to refer to is that of the incidence of the Income Tax. Every year during the discussion of the Budget I have urged that the incidence of the Income Tax should be considered, and I am glad to see that at last the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to appoint a Committee to consider it. To my mind the incidence of the Income Tax does want considerable attention. I have always urged that Income Tax should be a tax on income. In many cases it is not. There may be such cases as the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to, in which men pay on £2,000 or £3,000 a year instead of on £50,000. All I can say is that there must be careless collectors in those districts. At any rate, they are extreme cases. There are many cases in which the Income Tax paid, especially by the smaller payers, is much larger in amount than they have any right to pay. There are many cases in which the tax is not a tax on income at all, and I hail with great satisfaction the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the subject will be gone into. The present state of affairs has been a crying evil for many years, and although I doubt very much whether the Exchequer will gain by the inquiry, I think the tax will be made fairer. I do not think the late Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree with this proposal. I think he repudiated the idea of investigation. I have always held the theory that there should be a different scale for what are called spontaneous incomes, as compared with industrial incomes, that the tax should be lower in the case of those persons who have to depend on their labour for their incomes, and higher in the case of those whose incomes are not attained by the sweat of the brow. This is a large question, and one which I do not wish to dwell upon now. I am extremely glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has seen his way to relieve Income Tax payers. It seems to me that the action he has taken is a fair one. I repudiate altogether the idea that the Income Tax falls only on the rich. No doubt there are some rich people in the country still—I am glad there are—and they pay heavily in the Death Duties, which is a form of deferred Income Tax. In the course of a few generations a great part of a millionaire's wealth is absorbed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I should not mind accepting a million on those terms myself; but still the fact remains that a great part of it does ultimately come into the Exchequer by means of this deferred system of Income Tax, in addition to the Income Tax paid during the millionaire's life. The smaller Income Tax payer is, after all, the backbone of the country; he has paid a large share towards the war expenditure of the country, and I think it is only fair and proper that he should be the first to be relieved.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W. R., Rotherham): I confess I do not for a moment think that the anticipations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford are likely to be realised, and that hon. Members on this side of the House are in the least disposed to ridicule the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having repealed the Corn Duty. On the contrary, I, as one of the rank and file on the Opposition side of the House, warmly congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on having taken that step, not only because of the intrinsic amount involved, but because the removal of the Corn Duty is tantamount to the removal of a constant peril—the peril lest we should be forced to return to that policy of Protection which we had thought was abolished once for all. So long as that duty remained it stood as a constant encouragement to those in the country who were anxious to have it substantially increased, and the day might by-and-bye have arrived when a weaker Chancellor of the Exchequer would have yielded to the enormous pressure which would undoubtedly have been brought to bear upon him. But I think that the good intentions of the Government in regard to the Corn Duty are more than discounted by their evil intentions with regard to the Sugar Tax, which will be still further increased when the proposals of the Sugar Convention come into force. I certainly think, with those speakers on this side of the House who have preceded me, that the most glaring defect of the Budget is the paltry character of the relief which is afforded to the poorest class of the taxpayers. By the proposals of the Government the equilibrium between direct and indirect taxation is destroyed, and unfortunately it is destroyed entirely in the wrong direction. If the remission of £10,000,000 is to be given one would have thought that the greater part should be given to those who stood most in need of relief, and not that £8,000,000 should be given to the richer classes and only £2,000,000 to the poorer. I can quite understand that this Budget may be defended by some on the ground that the Government are once more looking after their friends. I will not pursue that topic, which I know is a sore one in certain quarters on the opposite side of the House; but I submit that the Government have still undoubtedly some friends amongst the very poorest classes of the community. So that, even on that theory, there would have been some justification for benefiting them more substantially than they are to be benefited by the present Budget. I do not know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer has regarded the question of the Income Tax in this light, but to me it does appear that the Income Tax is differentiated from indirect taxation in that even without changing its amount the actual sum to be contributed does vary with the varying income of the individual, so that a smaller income carries with it its own relief; but indirect taxation, on the other hand, does not vary very much with the income of the individual. When a man is doing uncommonly well he may spend more on drink and on tobacco than he would at other times, but in the matter of food the case is entirely different. If less wages are brought home on a Saturday by a working man, his children are just as hungry on that Saturday as they were on the previous Saturday when he brought home a larger sum, and from that point of view I think a special claim can be established for the amelioration of those whose lot is not only poor, but is becoming poorer still. It has been clearly shown by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day that he is aware of the fact that the wage earners are earning less now than for some time past. I daresay hon. Members may have noticed that month after month the paragraph headed "Changes in the Rate of Wages," in the *Labour Gazette* has invariably begun with the statement that the nett effect of the changes in the rates of wages reported during the month was a decrease of so much. That has been the monotonous tale for a great many months past, and it shows that the indirect taxes which have been contributed by the working classes, although not altered specifically in their amount, are gradually becoming a much heavier burden than when wages were higher. I cordially approve of the determination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to institute an inquiry into the incidence of the Income Tax. There is a great case for investigation in regard to that particular tax.

I am sorry that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not see his way to remove the Coal Tax. It does have the effect of hampering trade in many directions. I know that it has led to the loss of many important foreign contracts for coal, and the loss of these contracts obviously will be to diminish the volume of work for those engaged in the coal trade. We are in the habit of priding ourselves, and not without reason, that this assembly mirrors public opinion in the constituencies more or less accurately, but I put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he honestly thinks that the constituencies approve of a Budget amounting to between £140,000,000 and £150,000,000 in time of peace. For the last year or two in regard to this subject our tongues have been more or less tied. While the war was on the success of our arms was undoubtedly the first consideration of Members, not only on that side of the House but also on this side, but now that, happily, the sword is sheathed, it is time for us to put our house in order. I would like to ask where are the economists on the Government benches now? There was one a few months ago, but I am afraid that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol retired from office, the solitary representative of economy simultaneously disappeared. It is true that his successor this afternoon expressed a pious hope that our Army expenditure might be reduced, but a pious hope is not the language of a sturdy economist. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not, I think, wear the garb of an economist when he sought to defend the present outlay on armaments by proving that it was less in proportion to our income than it was forty years ago. A famous predecessor of his, Lord Randolph Churchill, in 1887 resigned his position as a protest against the military expenditure of the time I do not think there are many Members on the Treasury Bench who would contemplate resignation on that score now, although there is ten times more reason for it. If the Government is not more alive to the necessity for economy, I believe, judging from the by-elections we have had lately, that a determined electorate will insist on their views in regard to this matter being paid more attention to. I think it is obvious to every Member of this House that unless we husband our resources in time of peace we shall be incapable of making the supreme sacrifices in which the nation will be involved in time of war, for we shall be impoverished by having parted with and squandered money which is described as the sinews of war. Hence it happens that economy may from this point of view be regarded as the highest patriotism.

I think it is also obvious to most Members of the House that the least satisfactory item of expenditure is the £34,500,000 we are called upon to provide for the Army. That outlay has met with very severe criticism, and no more effective critics have made their voices heard in this matter than hon. Members on the other side of the House below the Gangway, who have spoken to such good purpose during the present session. The proposals of the Government with regard to the Army have been proved again and again to be both costly and inefficient, and it seems to me that in this important branch of expenditure we can ourselves take independent action almost without reference to other nations. We can decide on the plan on which we shall form our Army, upon its size and its nature, without reference to continental Powers. In regard to the Navy however, it is obvious that we have not at all the same freedom, for every Naval Power fights on a common battleground. Therefore it is obviously our duty to keep pace with the leading nations of the world; but I am very much afraid that instead of keeping pace we are, in their eyes, at the present time, guilty of forcing the pace. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself this afternoon recognised that many of our continental rivals would themselves welcome any proposals for the diminution of the outlay on the naval armaments of the respective countries. I can understand that among the different Governments there is considerable jealousy as to who shall take the initiative, lest the taking of the initiative should itself be interpreted as a sign of weakness. That I take to be a sentimental objection of which we in this country, with all our wealth, need have no fear. And whenever sentiment prevents us from facing facts, it becomes a National peril. That Statesman, Liberal or Conservative, will deserve well of his country and of the civilised world who does the best that in him lies to stop the policy of beggar-my-neighbour in armaments, and who works for a *pro rata* reduction, securing beyond all cavil our relative superiority as an essential factor, which, so far as I know, every great Power is willing to concede to us as being nothing more than our due.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): It is usual for those who have taken an interest in and who study finance to postpone their remarks on the Budget to the future occasions always afforded for the discussion of it, and the reason is that the Budget usually contains elements of complication which require to be considered quietly and deliberately before financiers pronounce upon it. That is less so this year than usual. The right hon. Gentleman's Budget statement is simple, broad, bold and intelligible, and, with a single exception to which I will come presently, I think his Budget is a good one. The right hon. Member for Sleaford seems to think it shows that the Government are riding for a fall. I do not quite think that. If they had that intention and desire, the "bullfinch" of the Bagdad Railway would have furnished them with an excellent opportunity; and I think I could myself have made sure of securing for them their desired fall. But much to my satisfaction they have swerved aside from that jump and have gone through a gap. I do not believe they are riding for a fall; I should rather think they are riding for a dissolution. I am encouraged in that belief by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth. The first part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was admirable. It was the speech of a financier, in which he dealt clearly and accurately with the Sinking Fund. But the second part of his speech was sentimental, if not hysterical. That was the speech of an electioneering agent preparing the ground for a General Election. My remarks on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be very few, but to one of them I think some importance should be attached. In the first place, I cannot but think, in spite of the right hon. Gentleman's protestations, that his estimates of the forthcoming year's revenue are extremely generous; that they are, in fact, too high. He estimates an increase of revenue for the year ending 31st March, 1904, of £3,200,000, or an increase of 2 per cent. over last year. I cannot think that the prospect of the increase in trade and of the prosperity of the country generally sufficiently justifies an estimate of so generous a character as that. Of course, I am aware that the right hon. Gentleman must rely on his Departmental officials, and I cannot and do not imagine that he exercised any influence in the preparation of the estimates of expenditure in order to improve his Budget statement this evening. That is, I think, impossible, for I have always found the right hon. Gentleman simple, plain, honest and straightforward. But there is, for instance, one item in that estimate of revenue which, I believe, cannot be expected to be realised, and that is the expected increase of £2,200,000 in the Customs for the coming year, on the basis of existing taxation. I hope I may be wrong. As to the Sinking Fund, I would point out that there are in our system two Sinking Funds. One is the old Sinking Fund, which is the excess, if any, of realised and actual revenue over realised and actual expenditure. That is the Old Sinking Fund. And the other, or New Sinking Fund, represents the balance which remains of what is called the Fixed Charge for Debt after the Interest on the Funded Debt, the Interest on the Unfunded Debt, the charge for Terminable Annuities, and the cost of management have been deducted from that Fixed Charge. To the New Sinking Fund I will return later. But as to the Old Sinking Fund, it is manifestly affected by an over-estimate of revenue such as I fear here. If any mistake of over-estimate has been made in the estimates of the revenue of the year, the result will be a serious damage to the old Sinking Fund. My own impression is that there is some over-estimate of the revenue to be derived next year, and that, consequently, the Old Sinking Fund will suffer.

Then, as regards the revenue for Crown Lands, as the Committee know, the department which administers the Crown Lands are allowed, contrary to the practice that governs all other departments, and contrary to the very principle of our finance, to deduct the whole of their expenses from the proceeds of these lands, and only pay the balance into the Treasury. Now, a very remarkable thing has occurred in connection with these Crown Lands. Up to the year 1901 the net amount received for the Crown Lands was always increasing. They had gradually risen from something like £300,000 to £500,000, at which they stood in the year ending March 1901. And naturally so, in spite of the Department of Woods and Forests making their own deductions. But from the beginning of the new reign the Crown Lands proceeds have steadily gone down. In the year 1902 they fell to £455,000; last year they were the same amount; and for this coming year the estimate is £445,000. Why is it that the receipts from the Crown Lands, which must be increasing in value, have gone down £55,000 in three years? I should like the right hon. Gentleman to give me some explanation of that. It suggests to me that the moment has arrived at which a sound financial system requires that the Woods and Forests Departments should be treated as all other Departments are treated, that is to say that they should pay into the Exchequer the gross receipts from the Crown Lands and that the House should vote the amount of their expenditure, instead of their being allowed to deduct it in what are apparently ever-increasing amounts. That is, however, a relatively small matter. The right hon. Gentleman makes his estimate of expenditure £144,000,000, and he adds expenditure from capital account, a sum of, I think, some £7,000,000. I need not remind the Committee that there is no such thing as a capital account in this country. We put all our revenue on one side of the account, and all the expenditure on the other, ; we neither have, nor could have, any balance sheet, and no one can estimate our full financial responsibilities or our full assets. Then the right hon. Gentleman adds local taxation and brings up his expenditure to a much larger sum. But even that larger sum does not represent the whole. I would remind the Committee that our public accounts are completely and absolutely false. In addition to the items mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, there are appropriations in aid, payments out of gross revenue, and many receipts of the Civil Service which are never brought into the account at all. As a matter of fact, the items I have mentioned ought to be added to both sides of the account, in order that the accounts might be made true. In addition, there is local taxation, which is now something over £100,000,000 a year—I am speaking of the three countries—and the local debt is considerably over £300,000,000. That also has to be kept in mind.

As to the Income Tax, I rejoice that the right hon. Gentleman is going to have an inquiry into it. The time is ripe for that. There are abuses connected with the Income Tax which are perfectly monstrous. I do not allude to taxing all incomes in the same way, because it is all income, however earned, and therefore all taxable as such. My hon. friend opposite claims that one sort of income ought to be taxed in one way, and another sort of income in another way. I say nothing of the kind. Whether you get income from property or from your brains, it still is income. If income comes from personal ability, when the ability ceases the tax ceases also; but if income is derived from permanent property the tax is permanent and continues. I see no grievance in that. What I do regard as a very serious grievance are the exemptions from Income Tax and the abatements which now exist in respect of the smaller incomes up to £700 a year. As a matter of fact, you only tax one-half of the incomes in the country, whereas you ought to tax them all. If you did that the result would be that a 6d. Income Tax would do the work that a 1s. Income Tax now does. I am aware that there would be difficulty in levying a tax on small incomes, but that is a question of machinery. Small levies of small taxes are not new. Penny and halfpenny postage stamps are small, but they mean a very considerable amount of revenue, without any inconvenience or trouble to the payer. As to the Corn Tax, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division and other hon. Members representing agricultural constituencies thought, when the tax was imposed, that a great new principle had been announced — a principle of eternal verity which would never be departed from. I ask myself what sort of a face the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol will present when he finds that the Corn Tax for which he argued with so much conviction is repealed. I agree with the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. I rejoice at the repeal. When the late Chancellor of the Exchequer put this tax on, I agreed to it with the greatest possible reluctance, and only because, as I explained at the time, of the very great emergency which had arisen. That emergency has now passed away; and now we have a new Chancellor of the Exchequer who most properly thinks it is his bounden duty, if he touches indirect taxation at all, to take off the tax on corn. I am convinced he is right. After all, it is a hard thing to tax the food of the people; and I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman in taking off this tax which his predecessor put on.

Now, I come to the one serious criticism I have to make. The right hon. Gentleman in appearance has increased the Permanent or Fixed Charge for the National Debt. In reality, he has diminished it. He has added £4,500,000 of extra Fixed Charge representing new funded debt—and therefore necessarily to be added—to the £23,000,000, and should thus have arrived at a Fixed Charge of £27,500,000. But he only proposes to make the new Fixed Charge £27,000,000, and he thus diminishes the balance available for the New Sinking Fund by £500,000. His new Fixed Charge of £27,000,000 is in reality not more but less than the old £23,000,000. And even this £23,000,000 was already £2,000,000 too little. Everyone interested in finance protested against the diminution from £25,000,000 to £23,000,000 when it was made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. Having diminished the fixed charge set aside for the Debt, the right hon. Gentleman seeks to justify himself by the expectation of certain sums he is to get from the Transvaal. But he is to get these sums out of loans he himself is to provide. In effect the Transvaal says that if the right hon. Gentleman will lend the money it will pay what it owes. But that will not be in the present; it is only an expectation; and I submit that the Sinking Fund should not be dealt with by expectation. You must have real, solid, realised facts when you are dealing with such an important pillar of public finance and public safety as the Sinking Fund. The most important feature of our finance lies in this permanent Fixed Charge. I regretted to see that sum largely reduced by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I regret to see it diminished, even in a small degree, by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nor do I think the reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman are at all sufficient. This is the one blot in his Budget. I do not think that any importance is to be attached to the right hon. Gentleman's calculations as to the final extinction of our debt; for whenever a Chancellor of the Exchequer tampers with the Sinking Fund, he always enters into an elaborate calculation by which he shows that he has invented a system which, if he only gets his diminution of the Sinking Fund on that particular occasion, will result in the whole of the National Debt being paid off in thirty or forty or fifty years as the case may be. I must just read to the right hon. Gentleman one extract which I hope will be chastening to him and prevent him indulging in these expectations as to the end of the National Debt. In May, 1887, Mr. Goschen, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, when proposing to reduce the Fixed Charge from £28,000,000 to £26,000,000, said—

> "The Chancellor of the Exchequer desires to observe that, according to a calculation which has been made, the proposed Fixed Charge of £26,000,000 will, if maintained, redeem the whole of the present Funded Debt (£600,000,000) at par in about fifty-two years, and the whole of the present National Debt (£700,000,000) at par in about fifty-six years."

Now mark, that was in 1887, so that Mr. Goschen, Lord Goschen as he now is, predicted, arranged for, and settled finally for the total extinction of the National Debt in the year 1943. The right hon. Gentleman says now—"I am going to make another arrangement for the Sinking Fund by which the whole of our National Debt will be got rid of in 1953." Thus putting off the end for another ten years, and I am afraid the next Chancellor of the Exchequer may present yet another fancy picture to us, but still put off the extinction of the National Debt to a still later date. As I have said, few remarks on details can be made upon a Budget on its presentation. With regard to this Budget, with the exception of the treatment of the New Sinking Fund, which I consider a mistake, I think it is a bold, a courageous, and on the whole, a good Budget, and, in my belief, that will be the opinion of the country at large.

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The hon. Member who has just sat down considers, with the one exception of the Sinking Fund, that this is a good Budget. In my opinion, and I believe the opinion of most of those who sit on this side of the House, that is the only good feature in it, because whichever way we look upon it it is a most disappointing Budget. Of course we agree with the proposal to get rid of the unfortunate tax put upon us last year, the Corn Tax, but I must say it will be rather difficult for the Government to argue that the remission of this £2,500,000 on the Corn Duty will be any relief to the indirect taxpayers; for they argued last year that it was no burden. I think hon. Members opposite will agree that if you give something like £10,500,000 to the payers of direct taxation, it is only fair that the payers of indirect taxation should have some relief. This £2,000,000 given on the Corn Tax will not be, in their opinion, a relief, and therefore I hope we may have the support of hon. Gentlemen opposite when we come to consider further reductions on the lines of indirect taxation. Nobody will dispute the proposition that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year, and what he stated afterwards, was that if after putting on an extra penny last year the national position was such that he was able to relieve the country of that extra penny or twopence this year, he should combine it with a considerable relief to the indirect taxpayers. We should not object to the two going hand-in-hand; but we object to the preposterous proportion of the relief to be given to direct taxation as against the infinitesimal relief given to indirect taxation.

The right hon. Gentleman said that of the taxation of the last two years £17,500,000 was put on direct taxation, and £15,500,000 upon indirect taxation. Now he proposes to relieve direct taxation by £10,000,000, and thus leave only £7,500,000 a year, whilst he leaves upon indirect taxation a burden of £13,000,000 a year, a burden, the Committee will bear in mind, which is not due to the war, but to the gross extravagance of the Government in regard to expenditure. And I am afraid that this is the last remission we are likely to have for some time to come, for the obvious reason that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is presenting this year an increase of expenditure of no less than £11,000,000. Since 1895, in a period of eight years, the expenditure of the country, owing to the gross extravagance of the Government, has risen by no less than £46,000,000; this year the Chancellor of the Exchequer has anticipated a reduction of £2,500,000. The Government anticipates a reduction next year of £2,500,000 in ordinary expenditure. This is from a Government which in eight years has increased the ordinary expenditure by £46,000,000, and even in the current year is increasing it by £11,000,000. It is surely too much for us to expect to get any reduction of expenditure from the Government constructed on its present basis. I am afraid, therefore, that this is the last opportunity the right hon. Gentleman will have of giving any relief of taxation, and that makes it all the worse that he should have devoted the whole of his relief to direct taxation.

I have said something with regard to the expenditure of the country. The annual taxation imposed during the last three years amounts to something like £33,250,000, while the elasticity of the revenue due to the increase of wealth and population has produced another £22,250,000 since the Government has been in office. They have therefore had the handling of no less than £55,500,000. Unfortunately, the increase of expenditure has been so great that it has swallowed up a large proportion of that, and these taxes on sugar, tea, corn, and so forth are really due to ordinary and not to war expenditure.

The right hon. Gentleman, in defending the way in which the Government have met the liabilities of the war, put the cost of the war at £217,000,000, and said that out of that sum £67,500,000 had been met from revenue. But the point as regards the Government is this: How much additional taxation have they imposed for war purposes? The liabilities were £217,000,000, but the extra taxation in the three years amounted only to £48,000,000. I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman fell into the fallacy which seemed to permeate the mind of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. We had to point out over and over again that while it was quite right during a time of borrowing to suspend the Sinking Fund because it was exactly the same whether you applied it to the liquidation of new debt or to the purchase of old debt, it was not right, in considering how much had been met from additional taxation, to take into account the question of the Sinking Fund.

In conclusion, I wish to say a word in regard to the proposals of the Government concerning the Sinking Fund. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman is going to reconstitute the Sinking Fund on its old basis, and make the charge of the debt a fixed charge. We shall all agree to that, but I think it extraordinary that the right hon. Gentleman should have left the impression on the Committee that he was going greatly to increase the application of the Sinking Fund to the redemption of debt. In his last speech as Chancellor of the Exchequer his predecessor distinctly said that he intended as soon as peace came to increase the Sinking Fund, but the right hon. Gentleman, instead of increasing it, is actually diminishing it by £500,000. The whole argument of his predecessor in 1899, when he reduced the fixed charge from £25,000,000 to £23,000,000 (and the right hon. Gentleman adopted his view this afternoon) was that the amount of the fixed charge ought to bear some relation to the burden of the debt. The Sinking Fund in 1899 was just under £6,000,000, with a debt of £630.000,000. If that is a minimum Sinking Fund for a debt of £630,000,000, the Sinking Fund for a debt of £800,000,000, as it now is, ought to be £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 a year. If that amount is added with the interest to the old Sinking Fund, the amount is not £27,000,000 as the right hon. Gentleman proposes, but more like £31,000,000 or £32,000,000 a year. The right hon. Gentleman said the proportion of the Sinking Fund had increased of late years. But £120,000,000 had been added to the total of the debt. Looking to the fact that we are giving £12,000,000 to remission of taxation, the right hon. Gentleman makes a most miserable proposal in regard to the extinction of debt. I should have thought that after the warning we have had in South Africa and China our experience there would have induced the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have made some better proposal. We shall have other opportunities of discussing the real blot on his proposals, namely that he is relieving the Income Tax payers to an unnecessary extent and not relieving the taxes upon the necessaries of life.

MR. J. FITZALAN HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): We are not so heavily burdened now as in the past, for we enjoy very great immunity which we can hardly hope for in the future. In support of this view I should like to call Sir Robert Giffen. Although we may not agree with all his theories, still on matters of finance his authority is undoubted. Sir Robert Giffen writing in *The Times* on January 10th last year said—

> "The abnormal character of the financial period which began about 1860 and continued to a recent date should be distinctly recognised. So many fortunate circumstances at the same time cannot be counted on in the history of any country. The growth of real expenditure may indeed be expected to continue . . . . but in all other respects the conditions seem likely to be more ordinary. In the way of outlay, especially, to guard against the armaments of foreign Powers, the good fortune which rendered possible the penuriousness of the sixties and seventies has ceased. It may be doubted whether that penuriousness was always as well-advised as it was popular. . . . But in any case there cannot be a doubt that our former immunity from the common lot of nations is at an end. Great military Powers have become great naval Powers, and we must be strong by land as well as by sea if the Empire is to continue at all."

He makes an estimate of what probably would have to be our normal expenditure in future, and he said that if it was £160,000,000 a year even then we should not be worse off than we were on the average in the sixties. This is borne out by a comparison of two other authorities, Mr. Dudley Baxter, who wrote in the year 1869, and the hon. and learned Member for Haddington, who spoke on this matter last year, and who has also spoken to-night. I notice that there was a slight variation in the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement, because last year he put the whole national income at no less than £1,750,000,000. To-night he takes it at £1,600,000,000, and of course if the latter figure is right the argument is somewhat invalidated, but only to a slight extent, and it remains substantially the same. Mr. Dudley Baxter in 1868 put the national income at £800,000,000, but the expenditure in 1868 was £68,000,000, and at the same proportion now, on the hon. Member's estimate of last year, it would have been £148,375,000; therefore on the figures we have heard to-night, we are better off in our expenditure than we were in 1868. Our expenditure is 8 per cent. now as against 8½ per cent. then, and even if you add the burden of the rates it works out at about 11½ per cent. of the total in each case. You really get a better result if you compare the amount of our debt to the whole volume of national capital as estimated by the best authorities. Let me just say that I think the hon. and learned Gentleman underestimated the debt of France. As figures have been supplied to me by Monsieur Jules Roche the present debt in France amounts to an equivalent in English money of a sum representing no less than £1,535,000,000, or considerably more than double our own. Taking this proportion between the National Debt and the whole volume of capital I draw even more favourable conclusions. I take the figures of last year, namely £768,000,000 as the whole volume of the debt, and it is practically the same this year. In 1865 it was considerably more, for it was then £815,000,000. But according to Sir Robert Giffen's calculation, the total wealth of the country was somewhere about £6,000,000,000 in 1865 and now it is £15,000,000,000. Of course if you go back to more remote times you will find, taking what we owed in 1815, that it was 33 per cent. of our total estimated wealth, and by that calculation we arrive at the enormous total of £5,000,000,000. I suppose Sir Robert Giffen would be the first to acknowledge that in all these calculations there is a certain speculative element. Making a very large deduction for them, the fact remains that our debt in proportion to our national wealth is nothing like as great now as it was in the time of Mr. Gladstone's great Budget. I do not want to put this before the Committee in any way as depreciating, but as praising economy, but I especially deprecate the idea that either of our two great fighting services should suffer. I confess that I was a little concerned by some remarks made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the growth of our Army expenditure, which I confess was somewhat different from the tenor we have heard from other speakers within the last few months from the Front Benches I know there are some hon. Members who think you can economise on the Regular Army by some definite development of the Auxiliaries, but I cannot think that they have thought out the difficulties of such a course. While on the one hand there is complaint of the cost of the Regular Army, on the other hand there is complaint amongst the Auxiliary Forces of the increased amount of work which is now expected from them. I know that is a serious question, and I trust the Commission recently appointed will find some way out of it. If you are to depend less on your Regular, and more on your Auxiliary Forces, it is certain that you will have to get more work out of your Auxiliaries. The statement which has been made is totally misleading, and I cannot get away from this conclusion: that unless you are to depend more on the Auxiliaries, you must maintain a larger Regular Army and pay them more.

There is one little matter, perhaps rather technical but none the less important, to which I would draw the Committee's attention for a moment. I refer to the rule whereby unexpended balances at the end of the year are not allowed to be carried over by the Departments, but are obliged to fall into the Sinking Fund. That, I believe, leads to great extravagance, because it entirely takes away from the officers of the Department any incentive to economy. They know that if they economise it is not they nor their work that will benefit by that economy. This matter was gone into by a War Office Committee some two years ago, and it was very distinctly condemned, and several instances were then brought up of the extravagance to which it led. It is not the practice in Germany, and although I know that very strict constitutional jurists will be against me, I think we will economise much more by allowing these balances to be brought forward in the ordinary way of business. There are two courses open—the one is to reduce expenditure, the other is to find fresh sources of revenue, and I believe it is to the latter we shall have to go. I have not the time nor the wish to consider this matter just now, but I will just mention this fact. Last year we re-organised the tariff of the Transvaal on this kind of basis. It was 7½ per cent. on most things; it was nothing on necessities and materials for the development of the country; it was more on luxuries. If we applied that tariff at home, I believe that £8,000,000 a year is a very low estimate of what would be gained without inflicting any palpable injury on the consumer. But if the consumer is the plea, let us consider that now in the course of taxation the consumer is very severely hit. I do not speak of the tax on corn which is now to be remitted. I have always thought that the burden of that disappeared in competition and was paid by the foreigner. I am bound to say that if the result of the remission is that food becomes any cheaper next year I shall be very glad, but I shall be much surprised. Undoubtedly the Sugar and Tea Duties do press very severely. I think that, roughly speaking, the duty on sugar amounts to something like 30 per cent. *ad valorem*, and on tea to 75 or 80 per cent. I do believe, if remission had to be given to indirect taxation, that it would have been more appreciated on either of these items. Personally I believe we shall have to go further and extend our basis of taxation, and get more out of the foreigner who competes with us. I confess I think that the Estimates of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are a little sanguine as to the future. I hope, however, that I may be wrong. But, whatever the means, the duty remains, and whatever the unpopularity we may temporarily incur, it would be nothing to the maledictions, both loud and deep, that would fall in the hour of trial upon a Government that had failed to tell the people what they knew to be the truth and to call on them to make timely provision for the common need.

*Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham): The Budget which the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has submitted to the House tonight has been variously described. We have been told that it is a dissolution Budget, and that the Government are riding for a fall. Personally, I would describe it, in the language of the cricket field, as an attempt "to stop a rot." It must have been a source of satisfaction to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be able to propose such a large reduction of taxation in this his first year's Budget. The question of the Sinking Fund has been dealt with so fully by hon. Members on both sides of the House that I will not say more than this with regard to it, that it must be evident, even if we get the money from the Transvaal and from China, that the additional provision being made for the Sinking Fund is not at all in proportion to the addition that has been made by the nation to the National Debt. The great point on which I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer is to be congratulated is in reference to the remission of the Corn Duty. There is no doubt that some hon. Members opposite are bitterly disappointed with regard to this, but, personally, I rejoice that this is not to be a permanent tax. It was, to a small extent I admit, a protective tax. It certainly bore more hardly on the very poor than any other tax, and I rejoice that the right hon. Gentleman has seen his way to remit it. Speaking in my constituency last night I said that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer reduced the Income Tax by 3d. he would have no money left for further remission of taxation. The course of events has proved the evil of making prophesies before one knows the facts. The right hon. Gentleman has not only reduced the Income Tax by 1d. more than I foreshadowed, but he has remitted the Corn Duty as well.

And it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress.

To sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CUSTOMS—TEA.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Customs duty now charged on tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say): Tea ... the pound, Sixpence."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): At the time of the adjournment I was congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the unexpectedly large surplus he was able to devote to the remission of taxation, and I was saying that I agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that I thought the Estimates of the right hon. Gentleman were based on a rather sanguine view of the possibilities of the future. Particularly is that the case with regard to the Customs. This year the returns show a reduction of £767,000 in the revenue from Customs on the Estimates, and next year the Chancellor of the Exchequer is estimating not only that he will get that £767,000 but in addition another £1,400,000. I think an estimate of that kind is not usual on the state of things as they exist in the country at the present moment, though I hope it will be justified. Many believe that when the Transvaal loan is floated there will be a considerable reaction in trade and that we shall have greater prosperity than we had last year, but in any estimate like this, which is based, as I understand it to be, on the returns of Income Tax as showing the general prosperity of the country, it is only right to remark that the Income Tax of last year was based on the profit of the three preceding years. I do not think the profits from business since 1900 have been so large as they were in 1899–1900, and it is possible that the Income Tax will not show that increase which the right hon. Gentleman expects, although, so far, I admit the returns of foreign trade are extremely good. But there are no signs of such a general revival of trade as would lead one to adopt the sanguine view which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has put before us. There is one other matter which may justify the right hon. Gentleman in regard to these Estimates, which is that he seems to be expecting that in future years there may be a considerable reduction in the expenditure of the Army. I hope the Government, although they refused all Motions on the subject when the Estimates were before us, has taken heed of what I believe is the general feeling of the House, if it could only be expressed without party feeling, and also the general feeling of the country, that we are spending more than we ought on military affairs. I have no doubt next year the right hon. Gentleman will be able to point to reduced Army expenditure, and that even if he has over estimated the receipts from the Customs he will not have to increase taxation. At Question time we had sad news with regard to Somaliland. It is quite clear in regard to that matter that instead of spending hundreds of thousands we may have to spend millions before it is concluded. The right hon. Gentleman also said there should be a Committee of Inquiry into the incidence of the Income Tax. I hope that will be held, but I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will find many such cases as the one which he instanced where the estimate was put up from £3,000 to £50,000. I know some industrial centres fairly well, and I think there can be but few cases of that kind. On the other hand, if we could lessen the number of assessments left to the Commissioners, and make everybody return their own incomes, it is quite possible that we might find many incomes under estimated, and the country would benefit.

I must join every hon. Member who has made an attack on the proportion of reduction that has been made as between direct and indirect taxation. The right hon. Gentleman said without including the Coal Tax the amount received from indirect taxation was £15,127,000, and the amount received from the Income Tax was £18,118,000. He is now proposing a remission of £10,000,000 in regard to the Income Tax, whilst he only remits £2,500,000 of indirect taxation, which will leave indirect taxation at £12,500,000, whilst direct taxation is only represented by £8,000,000 If to the indirect taxation the Coal Tax is added, the indirect taxation will altogether amount to £14,500,000, so that the old proportion of taxation will be entirely destroyed in the future, and indirect taxation will have been increased by far more than its just proportion. In regard to the Income Tax, we leave small incomes untaxed, and with regard to small incomes, I think, if it could be usefully done, there is an irreducible minimum of income which should not be taxed at all. We formerly carried out the principle almost because at one time of the necessities of life only tea was taxed, but now bread and sugar are taxed, and therefore the smallest incomes pay a considerable amount of taxation which a few years ago they did not pay. It has been said that a high Income Tax is a danger, inasmuch as it diminishes our possible resources when any great strain is put upon the country. That is true, and I think we ought to be very careful not to depart from the lines upon which our taxation has been based throughout, but I venture to say that we have been shown during the late war that the Income Tax is not our only resource in case of emergency. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Sugar Tax and the Bread Tax had been collected with very little trouble, so it has been clearly proved that in the case of any great strain coming on this country there are other sources besides the Income Tax.

In conclusion, the right hon. Gentleman dwelt, as all Chancellors of the Exchequer have done during the last twenty years, on the fact that the real danger of the country at the present time is our greatly increased and growing expenditure. It is quite hopeless for us to imagine that we are going to reduce our expenditure at home, because it is perfectly evident we must spend more rather than less in connection with the affairs of these Islands. The expenditure for the Navy cannot be reduced unless the expenditure of other nations on their navies is reduced also, but I hope the Government will lose no chance of joining any effort which may be made in that direction. We are left therefore with this, that the expenditure on our Army is the one thing upon which we may diminish the calls made on the taxpayers of this country. I believe, as I said before, that relief may come in that way, and I have only one suggestion to make in regard to this Budget. I once knew a case where a Chairman of the Finance Committee of a municipality left the local authority and went on the School Board in order to see what he could do in the way of reducing the expenditure of the School Board. He was not a success because he became an ardent supporter of increased expenditure. The suggestion I make is this, that if we spend too much on the Army we should ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to change places with the Secretary of State for War, which might demoralise the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but would probably make the Secretary of State for War an economist.

SIR ALBERT ROLLITT (Islington, S.): I do not propose to discuss the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman generally, but there are two points, one of which has been referred to very little and the other which has not been mentioned at all, to which I should like to refer. I should like to add my testimony to what I think was the most practical, able and business-like speech of my right hon. friend, and which, apart from the merits and demerits of his proposals, is one likely to commend itself to business men in this House. I re-echo, as many have done, the last words of my hon. friend opposite that this question of the combination of efficient economy with a decrease of expenditure is all important. I believe no work can be more useful to the country than the strict attention which is given to the revision of the Estimates of the country. With regard to the question of the Army I have been sorry to notice too great a disposition to magnify the importance and utility of a large Regular Army as compared with the cheap, and what I believe may be made a thoroughly efficient force in the shape of our Auxiliary forces. I do not think a feeling of fair regard to the difficulties and the condition of the Volunteer Forces has always been applied. The recent regulations are a mistake, and I think instead of seeking to economise in the direction of Army Corps and the like we should seek to economise by having a small force and developing in the people of our country a general readiness to take up arms if there is any necessity. I believe the Income Tax payers will be grateful for the remission of taxation, and I think they are entitled to—I do not say the full amount, because I might be disposed to deal somewhat differently with that point—but a considerable reduction is due to them. We ought to be very careful to retain the elasticity of this tax. It is not the only resource in times of emergency, but a very fruitful one, and it has the merit of being popular in this country. I think it is a good thing to maintain the equitable incidence of taxes, and not to tax the patience, as well as the pockets, of the taxpayers, and that, at the earliest opportunity, remission should take place. What I think will be even more acceptable is the proposal to institute an inquiry. The Income Tax is a very difficult tax to administer in some points of detail, and I certainly think, in instituting this inquiry, that regard should be had not only to the real incidence of the tax, but also to the position of the small tradesman, who has the struggle for commercial existence to undergo, upon whom this burden most heavily falls. The hon. Member for King's Lynn spoke against the suggestion that there was a distinction of principle, which I believe, between taxation of realised property and precarious income on profits made in trades and professions. My hon. friend and others have taken exception to exemptions and abatements, but I think without those this tax would be a cruel and unpopular one. In the matter of abatements, I should like to go farther and adopt some fair graduation which would adapt the tax to the men who are able to pay. I hope that is a suggestion which the Chancellor of the Exchequer will find it possible to deal with.

Apart from the Income Tax he has so generously remitted, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had considerable choice as to the reductions he might have made. He declined to remit the Coal Tax, because the exports had not been diminished, but I venture to think that this tax is disadvantageous to trade, and I do not admit the stoppage of exports to be the crucial test as to the propriety of the tax; I might remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that one of the arguments in favour of the tax was that it would restrict exports, and so prevent the remote and scientifically preventible possibility of the extinction of our coalfields in the dim future. I believe other means of economy in that matter will be devised to prevent the serious consequences that would ensue. With regard to tea, I think it may now be regarded as a practical necessity, and though I have a personal interest with regard to the remission of the duty on coal, I feel that the pressure of indirect taxation is very considerable, and I should have been extremely glad if some reduction had been made in the case of tea. Sugar again is distinctly a food—a necessary and most nourishing food—and an article indispensable to the great majority of the poor. I would remind my right hon. friend and the Committee that the Convention will come into operation, and whatever predictions may be made, I venture to say that it will increase somewhat the price of sugar. I should have liked that the figures had been so adjusted as to make a somewhat less decrease in the Income Tax and to remit some of the taxation upon either tea or sugar—if possible of such an amount upon sugar as would counteract the increase which will necessarily arise from the operation of the Convention. While I approve of the reduction in the Income Tax, I think there were considerations that might have pointed in other directions, and would certainly have been acceptable to myself. In regard to the remission of the duty on corn, I am glad to say that I am not in the dilemma of some of my hon. friends on this side of the House, and I have no concern with the approaching quarrels between the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. I think they are on the horns of a dilemma. If it was a good tax, as we were told, why remit it, and if it was a bad tax why was it ever imposed? In any case I have an absence of responsibility because I opposed it on principle. I did not support it reluctantly like the hon. Member for King's Lynn, but I voted against it, because I was not led away by those specious and fallacious arguments that no one would bear the tax, that everybody would benefit, and that everything would come out of nothing. Well, these are arguments, but they are not facts, and I am glad, that the situation has been redeemed by the present Chancellor, It was a standing temptation to proceed in a direction which I am sure would not have commanded the general approval of the House. I am glad it has been repealed.

I have only to add a word on one point to which I wish particularly to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention, and on which he maintained significant silence. On the occasion of the discussion of the Budget, reference has generally been made to a subject in which I have taken very great interest. I mean the question of our Savings Banks. Nothing has been said about the result of the decrease of interest on Consols this year in its bearing—a very important bearing—upon the future of our Savings Banks. I should like to point out to my right hon. friend that there is a growing liability of which he will have to take note unless he passes legislation on the subject. That arises from the fact that this year the interest on Consols is reduced by a quarter per cent. The effect of that will be felt by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in making him less able to meet the deficits upon the working of the Savings Banks and Friendly Societies, and it will involve him, much as we may regret it, in an expenditure of about £38,000. That will increase the deficits which he must meet this year to something like very nearly £250,000, and it will increase it in the next four or five years to an amount approaching £500,000. I am extremely sorry that this question should have to be raised from the force of circumstances, but a deficit of nearly £250,000 is a matter of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer must take note. A Select Committee on which some of us sat was appointed on the subject some time ago, and that Committee recommended that the interest payable by the Savings Banks to depositors should be reduced by $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. Some of us suggested the enlargement of the area of investment might meet the matter, but there was an equal division of opinion in Committee on that subject. Concessions were made, and I think it was ultimately, virtually agreed, in consideration of those concessions, that a compromise was inevitable, and, upon the whole, I think it would have to be accepted. These institutions are of the greatest importance to this country as a means of encouraging thrift, and I have to convey to my right hon. friend an expression of the belief of those interested, that he has not only their welfare at heart, but that he will do all he can when the exigency arises in regard to the price of Consols—which is really the cause of the difficulty—and we hope that he may see his way to meet it by some other means than the reduction of interest. In any case I ask him to state, if there is to be a reduction, when it is likely to take place. I take it that it must be effected within the present session by legislation if at all. The date suggested by the Committee was 20th November, 1902, but that is past, and I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be most inconvenient and most injurious, and would involve endless trouble if any date were fixed which was in the middle of the Savings Banks year. I hope and trust that until the 20th November no change will be made. I hope also that the change will be made simultaneously in the case of the Post Office Banks and the Trustee Banks, but that above all he will let us know as early as possible what are his intentions in that direction, and how he means to meet the deficiency to which I have referred. I hope that in the reply he makes he will indicate his interest in, and his sense of the value of, these banks, and give us an assurance that he will make that change, if it is made at all, as little injurious to thrift and the saving habits of the people as he possibly can. With these observations I beg to express general approval of his proposals. There are some details which I could have wished had been otherwise. But I believe the Budget to be sensible and practical.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, East): I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the hon. Member for Islington in regard to Savings Banks. It seems to me that it will be very disastrous if we are to add to the character of this Budget a further step which might possibly be taken, in view of the deficit that may arise, by reducing the interest on deposits in the Savings Banks. If you distribute your relief in the proportion of £4 to the rich man, and £1 to the poor man, and if you add to that a reduction of an eighth per cent. on the interest paid to depositors, it will be a very serious matter. I sincerely hope that either owing to the price of Consols, or to some other method, the right hon. Gentleman may see his way to meet this difficulty without reducing the interest on deposits. I can assure him from having discussed this question very fully with working men in the country, and those specially interested in it, that that would be most heartily resented, not only in this House but in the country itself. I should like to say—I do not wish to say it with any disrespect to the Members of the Select Committee—that some of those in the House may remember that I myself drew attention to the fact that the Committee was largely composed—almost entirely composed—of the banking interest representatives in the House. It was only by an effort which was made by myself and supported by one or two Members that one representative of the working classes was added to that Committee. I would strongly recommend the right hon. Gentleman to consider that fact in view of the recommendation of the Committee. With regard to the Budget, I consider it a rich man's Budget. What is more, I consider it a rich rich man's Budget, and for this reason. Two hon. Members for Islington have referred to the position of the small Income Tax payers. The right hon. Gentleman has announced, very much to the satisfaction of all interested in this question, that an inquiry will at last take place, but I will remind him and the Committee that a promise was made by his predecessor last year in reply to Amendments moved by the hon. Member for the Elland Division and by myself. In the course of the debates——

*MR. RITCHIE: The proposal I make is much wider.

*MR. CHANNING: I am quite aware that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is much wider. But the point to which I attach the greatest importance—and I hope it will be included in the inquiry—is the question of the conditions under which exemptions and abatements may be extended to the poorer classes of Income Tax payers. I myself would have ventured to suggest that instead of giving 4d. relief in the Income Tax that the reduction should only have been 2d., or perhaps only 1d., and the rest remitted to the poorer classes, and to the lower middle class, in this country, who, in my opinion, have borne far more than their share in the expenditure on this war. I cannot imagine why the right hon. Gentleman has not given 3d. off the Income Tax and applied the other penny to the extension of the system of abatements and exemptions for the poorer class of Income Tax payers. I shall move an Amendment in that sense with the view of giving relief in the way of exemptions and abatements to the struggling tradesmen, and small professional men who have really had to suffer far more than the great millionaires, to whom the reduction of 4d. on the Income Tax may be extremely pleasing, but it is not at all in any sense a necessity. I have for years past protested against the policy which underlies all these Budgets. It appears to me that, since 1895, we have had one perpetual policy of increasing expenditure which went to the benefit of the rich, and of shifting the burden of that expenditure, year by year, more from the shoulders of the rich to the shoulders of the poor. Hon. Members may regard that as a laughing matter, but I do not think it is [AN HON. MEMBER: It is not a fact.] Does not an increase in indirect taxation mean the transferring of a portion of the burden which would otherwise have fallen upon the wealthy classes to the shoulders of the poorer classes?

*MR. RITCHIE: What I say is that the change in the incidence of taxation in past years has been in the direction of putting taxation in the form of direct taxation and taking it off indirect.

*MR. CHANNING: The increase in the last three years——

*MR. RITCHIE: I am not talking of the last three years.

*MR. CHANNING: I am discussing the new forms of taxation. We have heard with the greatest satisfaction that the right hon. Gentleman is taking off the Corn Tax. I share a little the surprise of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford at the course taken by the Government in that respect, and I have some reason to do so, because I was the one Member in the House who moved in Committee that the tax should be imposed for one year only. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer replied to me last year—giving his quotation in exact words—

> "It has never been the habit of this House to impose a new indirect tax for one year only, and that for the obvious reason that it would leave everyone uncertain as to the future; for imposing any indirect tax only for twelve

months would undoubtedly interfere with trade, for a reason which would probably be inadequate, and which no Chancellor of the Exchequer would think of putting forward."†

and in concluding this section of his speech the right hon. Gentleman wound up by saying—

> "That is why I have proposed this Corn Duty as part of our permanent system of taxation."‡

Warmly as I welcome the remission of this tax, for the sufficient reason that I do not at all share the opinion of hon. Members opposite that the indirect taxation had been a light and trifling matter and the only burden had been upon the rich, I must say there is a complete *hiatus* between the reasoning of the Government last year which it was perhaps hard to account for. My right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford, and other Members representing the agricultural districts, remind me a little of a picture which appeared in one of the early numbers of Punch. It represented an agriculturist being drawn into swamps by a Will-o'-the-Wisp light. That was the Protection cry of those days. I have no doubt that many agriculturists in this House and out of it regarded this as a protectionist tax. But I confess, although I thought that it was of a protective nature, I always thought that the motive for the tax was largely connected with the Colonial Conference about to take place shortly afterwards. He conceived that the tax represented one of the suggestions which emanated from Birmingham, and certainly it was supported with remarkable persistency as well as ingenuity, by the present Postmaster-General. It has been said that this is a trifling tax which has not been felt by the people. I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford dwelt upon certain figures that appeared in the *Labour Gazette*. I do not think he can have considered those figures with very great care, because undoubtedly they show that whereas in some districts, when the tax was first imposed, and where the price of bread was already high and left a margin to the traders and bakers, the price did not rise any further. But what are the facts with regard to London, which contains 5,000,000 people. They show an increase in the price of bread of 1d. all over this vast metropolitan area. [An HON. MEMBER: No!] These are the official figures given in the *Labour Gazette*. The price was from 3½d. to 4d. in 1902, and from 4½d. to 5d. in 1903. If the hon. Member can produce better figures than these he is welcome to answer me.

MR. CHAPLIN: What I stated was that the figures in the *Labour Gazette* showed that in some of the larger towns in the North of England there had been a reduction. Would the hon. Member kindly read the statement with regard to Oldham and also the whole of the statement with regard to London?

*MR. CHANNING: I am aware that Oldham is one of the instances in which there has been a reduction, but in the greater number of cases to which the right hon. Gentleman refers the price has remained the same. In all cases that is the fact with the exception of Manchester and Liverpool, where the price was low in 1902 and has remained the same. I do not profess to understand the reason for the state of the price there, as I am not familiar with the conditions in those cities.

MR. CHAPLIN: They are reduced.

*MR. CHANNING: No, they have not been reduced. Oldham is reduced, but not either Manchester or Liverpool. I think I have sufficiently referred to that matter. What I wish to say is that with one or two exceptions prices are either the same or have risen since last year. That is, I believe, incontrovertibly proved by the official figures. Now we are asked to consider the Budget in which there is this relief of the Corn Tax and a relief of 4d. on the rich man's Income Tax. I wonder if hon. Members have really considered what the Corn Duty and the whole of this indirect taxation has meant for the poor man. An agricultural labourer with 14s. a week, who spends one-third of his income on bread and other articles which paid the Corn Duty, has been paying, without any increase in the price of bread, an Income Tax of 3½d. in the £. But if the price of bread went up ½d. he was paying an Income Tax of 13d. in the £, and in the case of the London working man, where the price of the loaf had gone up a 1d., and had this imposed on him not four but eight times the *ad valorem* duty, there was an Income Tax of 26d. per £. There is no doubt whatever about these facts. The hon. Member for Islington, who first addressed the Committee, seemed to consider that the poor man's case, in this matter, was entirely a question of the consumption of alcoholic liquors. I am quite prepared to take the basis of a teetotal working man's budget and to show that taking the consumption of tea, sugar, bread, and tobacco, the taxation of non-alcoholic articles has meant for working men, with incomes ranging from the labourer at 12s. to 14s. to the incomes of workers at 35s. to 40s. per week, has meant that they have been paying an Income Tax from one-and-a-half to double what the rich man has paid during the last two years. I have shown that in the case of the labourer the Corn Tax alone represented something like an Income Tax of 1s. in the £1 where the price of the loaf had gone up, as it did very generally, and as I found it universally the case in Devonshire and the West of England.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cix., 164.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cix., 167.

There is another part of the question in regard to the full incidence of taxation on the poorer classes of the community, which has not been mentioned in the debate, but which should not be left out of consideration by hon. Members who wish to do justice as between man and man. The hon. Member for King's Lynn referred to the enormous increase in local taxation. That is a matter which we cannot leave out of sight. I ask hon. Members to consider this fact besides the fact that the working classes have been paying in indirect duties a higher Income Tax during the last three years than the wealthier classes I have been in consultation with some of the most experienced financiers in the Co-operative movement during the past few days in regard to this matter. I asked them what is the proportion which the working man pays out of his wages for local rates either directly or indirectly, and the answer was that, taking the income of the working man at 26s a week, the amount of rent he paid was 6s., and that the proportion of the rent which belonged to the rates was 1s. 8d. That means that the working man pays indirectly through rates an Income Tax of 15d. per £. Now, what proportion of his income does a man who occupies a house rented at £400 or £500 pay in rates? Instead of paying an equivalent to a tax of 15d. in the £, he is paying an equivalent to a tax of something like 3d., 4d., or 5d. in the £ for local rates. Taking it all round, it will be found that the working classes are paying in Income Tax, without counting alcoholic liquors at all, more than double what the wealthy classes are paying. I think, if inquiry were made into this matter, that that would be proved absolutely and incontrovertibly. I regard it as a national misfortune that power has been in the hands of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite during the last seven or eight years. Instead of a reversion to expenditure on a peace footing, as was the case after the Crimean War, but we have practically a crystallisation of the war expenditure imposed for ever in a time of peace. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has spoken of a reduction being possible on the Army Expenditure. I do not know whether he is going to take over the control of the War Office or is going to induce his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War to abandon his scheme of Army Corps. But unless he gets rid of the policy of the War Office his speech consisted of so many meaningless words that cannot be realised. I associate myself with the hon. Member for Kings Lynn in his allegation that this surplus which is being distributed is a fictitious surplus. During the last few years the late Chancellor of the Exchequer has adopted the policy of taking an immense margin of money above his actual necessities, and most of this money has disappeared in a mysterious way, while the position of the year following has been made to look better. I cannot see how, on the figures, the right hon. Gentleman can make ends meet next year. This fact remains, that there has been an increase in the expenditure of the country of between £40,000,000 and £50,000,000 a year, without any real prospect of reduction. Unless a bold policy of retrenchment is really entered upon, it will be well nigh impossible to make any further reduction then in taxation.

*MR. J. WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I think there will be but one opinion—that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has performed his task in a thoroughly able and businesslike manner. This was what we might have expected from a man of his training. Last year when the Budget was presented a great war was raging and expenditure was going on apace. Unfortunately, owing to the demands made in South Africa and elsewhere, that expenditure has still to a very great extent to be calculated for. We expected after the visit of the Colonial Minister to South Africa, which was made in such a brilliant way, that a large amount towards that expenditure would be secured from the Transvaal. Some of us have said during the past four years that the Transvaal ought to pay a much larger amount than she wishes now to contribute. Before the war the mining magnates said that if British rule could be substituted for Boer Government the advantages it would bring would be worth over £100,000,000 sterling. I am sorry that the Colonial Minister has not been able to secure that £100,000,000, for I am still of opinion that in spite of the difficulties in regard to native labour the Transvaal is quite able to pay that amonnt. I must congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his abolition of the Corn Tax. I voted for that tax when the war was raging, but when the war was over I opposed it and urged its discontinuance, and voted against it, and I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his courage in having retraced the step taken in putting a duty on the bread of the people. Although it was a mistake in putting it on I am sure the remission of this taxation will secure the confidence of the people. I am also glad to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the Income Tax reduction. I agree that a large proportion has been taken off the Income Tax as compared with the amount taken off indirect taxation, but the precedent of the Crimean War ought not to be forgotten. When that war was ended the Income Tax was reduced from 1s. 4d. to 7d. in the £, and I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has therefore a very good precedent, and has to a great extent met the expectations of his supporters.

I am, however, a little disappointed that we have had no statement in regard to the Coal Tax. The right hon. Gentleman might have reduced the Income Tax by 3d., and taken 1d. off the Coal Tax. I urge this because I consider the Coal Tax economically unjust and oppressive to the industries of the country. I know that the right hon. Gentleman, in reply to a deputation which asked him to abolish the Coal Tax, urged that they could not expect a remission of the Coal Duty considering the amount of coal which was exported. But there are very good reasons why the volume of coal exports has not fallen off. It is perfectly well known that in America there have been enormous disturbances of labour; and during the first three months of this year no less than 976,000 tons of coal have been exported from this country to the United States, and that is really after all the total expansion that has taken place in the coal trade in this country. But the coal trade is one which has always expanded. Since 1850, when the total exports were only 3,000,000 tons, these had expanded to 43,000,000 tons; and if there had been no reason for the inflation I have mentioned there would still have been expansion in the coal exports. The price of coal has fallen, the wages of miners have fallen, and, more than all, freights of coal have fallen. Had the shippers of this country, when the Coal Tax was put on, been fully alive to their own interests, I am perfectly certain that they would have prevented the imposition of the Coal Tax. There was at that time, however, a natural feeling that the enormous profits which were made by the coal owners should be taxed. It was, however, forgotten that these were not ordinary profits but arose from an undue expansion of the trade. Owing to the low price of the article and the low freights foreigners now get coal cheaper than before the imposition of the tax. If we are to have no redress in the way of reduction of the tax, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a Scotsman and a good business man, ought to apply the tax on an *ad valorem* scale. Why should Scotch coal, which is only 7s. or 8s. per ton be taxed at the same rate as Welsh coal, which brought 13s. or 14s. per ton. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted the principle so far, for he gave a remission on small coal under 6s. a ton, and what is to prevent the present Chancellor of the Exchequer from giving an additional concession. Taken as a whole I maintain that a coal export duty is economically unjust and oppressive. There is no indication of any scarcity of coal in the near future, and I believe that the Royal Commission that is at the present time making inquiry into the subject, will be able to show that there is at least ten times more coal yet to be worked than has been worked up to the present time, and that the supply will last for hundreds of years. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to take my suggestion into his most earnest consideration and if he cannot take off the whole tax he should make it an *ad valorem* duty. I am in the hope however, that if he has such a surplus next year as this, he will take off the whole tax.

*MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire): There is one item in the Budget which will give satisfaction to the working classes of Lancashire, and that is the remission of the Corn Tax, against which they expressed very strong opinions a year ago. One cannot help having a certain amount of sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford in the step the Government have taken, and in seeing the last hope of a policy he has long advocated disappear. I think, however, he will find that the Government have had good reason for the action they have taken. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the late Chancellor of the Exchequer as saying that the Corn Tax was the least injurious tax he could discover. I will not argue with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford as to injury to the consumer; but whether the consumer has been injured or not, I think it has been discovered that the corn tax has inflicted an injury in one quarter, and that quarter is the Government. Therefore, the Government have very good reason for dropping a tax which they have discovered to be rather unfortunate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself appears to be conscious of that injury, because he said that the tax lent itself to misrepresentation. That is rather a singular statement to make. Are all the acts of the Government which lend themselves to misrepresentation to be disavowed; and is the Government to be influenced by a misrepresentation and change its policy? because that policy has been misrepresented? I am not quite sure that one cannot turn the accusation the other way round, and ask whose were the misrepresentations? Were they those who said that the tax would not hurt anyone, and would be paid by American railway shareholders? If that were true, is not the Chancellor of the Exchequer giving £2,500,000 away to the corn growers in the United States and Russia? But, I take the Chancellor of the Exchequer's own ground. I say that the country rejected the tax because, as the right hon. Gentleman himself says, corn is more a necessity of life than any other commodity, because it is raw material, and because it is the food of the people, and of the horses and cattle which serve the people. I would wish to be allowed to congratulate the Government in retracing what I sincerely believe to have been a wrong step in fiscal policy, all the more as they have put it out of the power of any future Chancellor of the Exchequer to initiate a preferential tariff on colonial corn. The Government have, I think, more steps to retrace. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that he has no sympathy with the cry for a free breakfast table. That has been shown by his disposal of his surplus, which gives £10,500,000 to Income Tax and only £2,500,000 to indirect taxation. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to Cobden, on the Navy. I wish the right hon. Gentleman had as much belief and trust in Cobden as a man who understood the conditions of the people and the way in which taxation ought to be laid upon them, as he had in Cobden's opinion as to the necessity for a strong Navy. In 1859 the taxes on commodities in England were £1 11s. 7d. per head. That was the time when Cobden and Bright concentrated the attention of financial reformers on a free breakfast table. In 1901 the taxes on commodities were again £1 11s. 6d., after having been reduced by successive Governments. For forty years the free breakfast-table has been the object of the Liberal Party. Every step taken in that direction by the Liberals was imitated by Tory Chancellors of the Exchequer; and even the present Chancellor of the Exchequer will admit that Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Goschen were statesmen in abolishing the last remnant of the duty on sugar, in reducing the tea duty, and in abolishing the duty on currants.

It apppears to me that the policy of the Government with reference to the incidence of taxation indicated by this Budget shows that the Government have taken advantage of the war to reverse what has been the settled policy of this country for nearly half a century—a policy founded on equity and justice by proportioning the burden to the power to pay. The basis which existed before the war is altered. It is a basis which existed after a Conservative Government had been in power for four years, and which was not discovered to be unjust. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave the contribution from Income Tax payers to the increased revenue occasioned by the war at £39,800,000, and the contribution from indirect taxation at £31,932,000. What remission is now promised? Taking a period of three years the Income Tax will be reduced by £31,500,000, and indirect taxation will be decreased by £7,500,000. I think the true position will be best seen if we reverse the process by which the taxes were put on. The taxes were put on in layers, year after year, and let us revert to the position which obtained before the last penny was put on the Income Tax and the Corn Duty was put on. Suppose the war had been over earlier, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not have thought of putting an additional penny on the Income Tax last year, or putting on the Corn Duty. If we take the Corn Duty off, and the last penny on the Income Tax off, we then find the Chancellor of the Exchequer has reduced the Income Tax by 3d. without giving any corresponding reduction to indirect taxation. In 1900–01 tea, beer, spirits, and tobacco were taxed additionally to the amount of £5,600,000; the Income Tax was raised to 1s., producing an additional £8,000,000. In the next year sugar and coal were taxed and produced £8,000,000; and the Income Tax with an addition of twopence also produced £8,000,000, with the surplus from the previous addition. Step by step the Income Tax and indirect taxations have been increased, but now when we come to a remission of taxation, if we take off one year's layer, the Income Tax alone receives remission. I think there is a strong claim that the reduction of taxation ought to have been carried out in the same proportion as taxation was put on. It has been claimed that men with 30s. a week should not pay in the same proportion as men with £30 or £300 a week. I agree with that; but there is also a strong claim that there should be at least a minimum which the very poorest householder should have untaxed. There should be an untaxed minimum. Many labourers do not get anything like 30s. a week, and there are many households which have no able-bodied men, and taxation bears upon them with undue severity. Nearly a fourth of the workers of this country receive such scanty wages that they cannot purchase sufficient food and clothing to make them efficient; and taxation tends to further reduce expenditure on food, and, therefore, further reduce their efficiency. Those whose incomes are so small that they cannot buy enough of the necessaries of life ought to be entirely exempt from taxation. With regard to the National Debt, I do not think that the measures which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken for its reduction are by any means heroic. The Sinking Fund was fixed at £23,000,000, because it was foreseen that this year there would be a reduction.

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly not. I deny that.

*MR. TOULMIN: That was what was understood at the time. It appears to me that it would be more to the advantage of the country if we had a Sinking Fund for the debt incurred by the war, leaving the £23,000,000 alone. I should like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what basis he fixes the amount for the reduction of the debt. Is the proportionate wealth of the country taken as a basis? In that case we are better able to pay £28,000,000 now than during the years in which the nation did pay £28,000,000. Again, is the basis our responsibility? Our responsibility in the amount of territory and the millions of subject races that have come under our sway indicates that we may well think it necessary to give more attention to paying off the National Debt. The deplorable incident which was announced this afternoon shows the vanity of prophesying that the National Debt will be paid off in forty, fifty or sixty years; and the war has shown how easily the savings of thirty years may be dissipated in three unfortunate years.

Mr. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): As a Lancashire man, following a Lancashire man, I congratulate my right hon. friend on the repeal of the tax on corn, and also on the large reduction in the Income Tax. I recognise that that reduction will mean in populous districts still further employment. It seems to me that the point of the speech of my right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division was a question as between the producer and the consumer. My right hon. friend, no doubt, speaks for an agricultural district, where corn is produced; I speak as one of the representatives of Lancashire, where corn is consumed. When my right hon. friend referred to the speech of the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer in proposing the Corn Tax, he forgot altogether that the proposal was made without consultation with members of his Party; and although many of us voted for the tax in order to keep the Government in power, we did not approve of it. Two or three days later, after it was proposed but before it was agreed to, I spoke in my own constituency, and said that the country had returned the Government by a huge majority in order to prosecute the war; and that I looked on this tax as a tax in connection with exceptional expenditure to pay for the war. Now the war is over, and I came here to-day prepared, if the tax was not removed, to urge on my right hon. friend to remove it as soon as possible; because in Lancashire we hold the traditions of Cobden and Bright. I represent one of the divisions of Salford with a population of 230,000; and I cannot forget the history of my county, or the incidents of Peterloo. Therefore, I was naturally opposed to this tax; and I am only too delighted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has seen his way to remove it. It was said when it was imposed that it would not inflict any great burden on the people, and my right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division said to-night that since the tax was imposed the price of corn was less and the cost of bread had fallen. Why? Because the tax was imposed when the market was falling. The same thing was said with regard to the Coal Tax. But, although the price of corn and the price of bread may be less now, it might be said that if the tax were not imposed, the price of corn and of bread would be still less. It is also said that the removal of the tax will, at all events, remove misrepresentation. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken succeeded in winning Bury for the Opposition upon this tax. We know how that was done; we know what was done by the Co-operative societies; we know how the price of bread in Bury was raised; and how the hon. Gentleman won the seat. But, as I have said, I have always opposed this tax.

An HON. MEMBER: You voted for it.

*Mr. LEES KNOWLES: Oh, yes; I voted for it because I was not going to turn out a Government which had been returned to prosecute the war; but I explained my views at the time, and said I had always opposed a tax on the food of the people. This tax on corn goes even farther, because not only corn but also offal and starch products are taxed, which has a very important bearing on many industries in Lancashire. I have received a letter from a firm in my constituency referring to a deputation from the Calico Printers Association which waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to point out the difficulties arising in connection with the drawbacks on exports. The firm in question are both calico printers and dyers, and they assert that especially as dyers and finishers they are very hard hit. They say—

> "We are both calico-printers and dyers, and we can safely say that calico-printers are not nearly so hard hit as dyers and finishers in this matter, a great proportion of mineral matter being used in the bulk of their finishes. Our dyeing and finishing department shows that for a similar turnover in the finished article the consumption of dutiable material is more than doubled, and in some finishes it would be much more than this, as our finishes to a great extent are soft finishes, that is, they are not heavily filled with size. It has cost our firm during the past year in direct duty alone an amount equal to twice the Income Tax, so that we are in reality paying triple Income Tax, compared with other trades. . . Had the tax been accompanied by taxation on the foreign manufacturer and finished work from abroad, it would probably have been to a large extent counterbalanced."

This shows that the tax on corn is not merely a tax on the poor man who buys his bread, but that i is also a tax on the manufacturer and those whom he employs. Of course the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford thought a new policy was inaugurated last year and, like the hon. Member for Sheffield, approved the new form of taxation.

Mr. J. FITZALAN HOPE: On the contrary, I said the Corn Tax was prejudicial to the policy I advocated.

*Mr. LEES KNOWLES: It was the hon. Member for the Central Division to whom I referred; I had for the moment forgotten that there was any other Member for Sheffield.

Mr. BATTY LANGLEY (Sheffield, Attercliffe): I may remind the hon. Gentleman that there are other Members for Sheffield who did not approve of the duty. I for one did not.

*Mr. LEES KNOWLES: I am glad to find I get some support from Sheffield. My point is this. The tax was contrary to the policy of Free Trade and it was a tax on the food of the people. I therefore congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on having removed it and thus on having got rid of a source of much misrepresentation.

Mr. ROBSON (South Shields): When the Corn Tax was introduced it was announced as a small burden, and I presume we must infer that its remission is a small boon. It is clear, however, that the remission of the tax is a great relief to the conscience of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Member who has just spoken has endeavoured to explain that he has acted consistently throughout in regard to this matter. True, he admits he voted for the tax, but he says he was aware that in doing so he was doing a wrong thing, and throughout he has, he says, maintained unaltered his profound conviction that the tax was not a good one.

*Mr. LEES KNOWLES: I explained to the House at the time that I voted for it, merely as an exceptional war tax.

Mr. ROBSON: The hon. Member has forgotten that when the tax was imposed the war was over.

*Mr. LEES KNOWLES: No, but, whether the war was over or not over, you have to pay your debts when you have incurred them.

Mr. ROBSON: When the tax was introduced we alleged that it was a war tax, but the then Chancellor of the Exchequer was particularly careful to refrain from calling it a war tax, and he introduced it and defended it as a permanent tax. The hon. Member's admirable consistency did not stop there. He made some no doubt sincere, but almost pathetic, references to Cobden and other Lancashire men, and then went on to defend the Coal Export Duty. I am not surprised at the hon. Member's defence of that duty. When that duty was introduced we opposed it, and pointed out that it would fall with unequal incidence on different classes and different districts. Welsh coal held a totally different position to the coal exported from our north-eastern ports. It was coal exported from the north-eastern ports to the ports in the north-east of Europe, there coming into competition with German coal, that was bound to feel the duty most heavily. What has actually happened with regard to that coal? The Chancellor of the Exchequer has claimed that the duty has not diminished exports. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman means exports generally. But exports from districts affected by foreign competition have diminished. Exports from north-eastern ports have largely diminished, and in the neutral market to which the coal from those districts is sent, German trade has increased 20 per cent. Thus we have made a deliberate transfer of the trade to the German coal owners. I wish to look at the Budget from the point of view of general policy. The remission of Income Tax will amount in due time to something like £10,000,000, and from the taxation on food and trade something like £2,000,000 will be removed. My hon. friend the Member for Northampton said the war has been used as a means of transferring burdens from the rich to the poor. That is actually true. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that £18,000,000 has been put on in the form of direct taxation and £15,000,000 in the form of indirect taxation. The right hon. Gentleman is now remitting £10,000,000 of the former and £2,000,000 of the latter, so that £13,000,000 out of the £15,000,000 on food and trade will remain, and only £8,000,000 out of the £18,000,000 on income. In addition to this we have to take into consideration the doles given to particular classes. You must not look at one Budget by itself. You must look at the general trend of fiscal policy, and consequently you must, in considering this matter, bear in mind the relief given to supporters of voluntary schools under the Education Act. The war has been made the occasion not merely for increasing the burdens of all classes, but for relieving certain propertied classes at the expense of the general trade and industry of the country. Thus the Government have not merely increased expenditure, but have transferred burdens from the richest to the poorest.

Let me invite hon. Members to consider how taxation falls on different classes of the community. Every tax falls sooner or later in an industrial community upon all classes, but it does not fall on every class with equal weight. Speaking generally, taxes upon food and trade fall on the industrial and labouring classes—that is to say, the principal weight, as measured by sacrifice, falls upon them. With regard to Income Tax, the principal weight or sacrifice falls upon the trading and professional classes; it falls with much greater effect upon them than upon the propertied class. The man who derives his income from property has an income of which he may spend a far larger proportion than would be legitimate in a man who derived his income from his profession or trade. The man who pays upon the whole of his trading income is paying practically upon that which he ought to regard as part of his capital, because it has to be laid to reserve, but the man who pays upon property is not doing anything of the kind. This Government have levied their taxation in the form of indirect taxes upon the industrial and trading classes, and their direct taxation in a form which falls most upon the trading and professional classes. The propertied class, which ought to have borne some special share of this additional burden, so far from having been specifically burdened, has been specifically relieved, and I say that we should do wrong if we allowed this financial debate to proceed without keeping that fact well in mind. These measures for relieving property are apparently by no means ended. Before next week is over we shall be discussing another great grant, also to a particular class, and also without reference to the fact, now becoming very serious indeed in our administration, that all these grants have to be borne in large part by the necessities of the poor. I should have been very glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made the remission of the Corn Tax an indication of a change of policy, but I listened with some forebodings to what he said on that point. He dealt with tea and sugar. What did he say about tea? He said it was not a necessary of life; it was not a raw material. I hope the Committee will not regard that as a sound proposition in either finance or economics. Tea is an article of food, and whatever is an article of food is a raw material of labour.

*MR. RITCHIE: When I was addressing the Committee on these taxes every observation I made upon the one was relative to the other. The question was which of the taxes I should take.

MR. ROBSON: The right hon. Gentleman is perfectly accurate; that is what he was doing, and I am taking the reasons that he gave. He went on to say that people sometimes took too much tea. I could not help reflecting on what his predecessor had said in regard to bread. Bread, he said, was very often wasted. Apparently tea is a new form of excess. Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer are very fond of posing, not as persons who burden the poor—far be such a thing from their intention or their policy—but as philanthropic persons who desire to restrain the prodigality of the poor. Too much tea is drunk; so much bread is wasted!

*MR. LEES KNOWLES. The crumbs fell from the rich man's table.

MR. ROBSON: Yes, and I suppose that soon they will be all that the poor will have to eat. Taking what the right hon. Gentleman said as indications of policy, I was much struck by his choice of comparisons. Every Budget I have heard has been fertile in comparisons of different epochs. The right hon. Gentleman has dealt much in comparisons both here and outside. He tells the working classes of the country that they must not complain, because they do not bear as great a percentage of the total taxation as in 1856 and 1858. Again he tells us to-day that we must not complain, because the amount of taxation per head at the end of a war with 50,000 farmers is not so great as at the end of a war in which England stood against organised Europe under one of the greatest military geniuses of the world, when at the end of year after year of heroic and magnificent sacrifice, England had reached almost her last sovereign. The Chancellor of the Exchequer chooses that period as one suitable for comparison with to-day! The standard of comfort for the industrial classes is apparently to be drawn from 1858, and the right hon. Gentleman's standard of the burden for the community at large is to be that which existed in England at the end of the Napoleonic war.

*MR. RITCHIE: It is an entire misrepresentation.

MR. ROBSON: The right hon. Gentleman says it is a misrepresentation. That would be a very serious word to come from his own lips had he not used it once before this evening. He said he had been guilty of misrepresentation with regard to the corn tax. The word "misrepresentation" is, I believe, a parliamentary expression, but it is an extremely disagreeable one, and might not inappropriately be termed an offensive one.

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member must not misrepresent what I said. I did not say that he or any other hon. Gentleman had misrepresented the Corn Tax, but I said it was a tax capable of being misrepresented.

MR. ROBSON: Now is the right hon. Gentleman fairly representing the meaning he intended to convey to the Committee? I will not use the word "misrepresentation." We do not judge of inuendoes and insinuations of that kind by what the mere words technically purport to convey; we look at their substance and sense. What on earth did the right hon. Gentleman mean when he said that this was a tax which lent itself to misrepresentation if there has been no misrepresentation about it? We know perfectly well that allegations and assertions may be made by inuendo just as well, and perhaps more conveniently, than in any other form. I would like to ask where has the misrepresentation been with regard to the Corn Tax? What did we on this side contend, only too frequently amid laughter and interruptions? We contended that the Corn Tax fell as a burden on the English consumer. Does anybody now deny it? ("Yes.") There are some who do. Then they apparently, do not follow the Prime Minister. If we may judge from the attitude of the Prime Minister to-night he desires to deny it, because he interrupted my hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire when he described him as having said it did not fall on the consumer. The Prime Minister did not like the reference, and said, "Where is it? Produce your *Hansard*." I have taken the trouble to look up *Hansard*, and what the right hon. Gentleman said when the tax was being debated was that "its effect on the working classes would probably be nothing." When we said it would be something we were charged with misrepresentation. I think our "misrepresentations" have proved to be correct, otherwise, why have you taken off the tax? What is meant by this extraordinary policy at a time when the Exchequer is being depleted by so many demands, when our expenditure is rising as the income used to rise—by leaps and bounds? What is meant by making this magnificent remission to the foreign producer? What have American railways done for us that we should give them £2,000,000 per annum? These are the assertions which, like curses, are coming home to roost. One is entitled to reflect upon the way in which the House and the country have been treated over this tax by those who defended it. It has not been fairly and sincerely defended. The arguments which have been used in its favour have savoured of petty and contemptible dialectic.

The right hon. Gentleman made another reference in telling us why he took off the tax which struck me as ominous. He said, "There is no elasticity about it." That is a phrase to reflect upon. It meant, of course, that he dare not increase the tax. The people make a great deal of noise about their bread; but their is plenty of elasticity about tea and sugar. We are to assume, I suppose, that the taxes on the food and trade of the people which are retained have the virtue of elasticity, and I think I can predict where the elasticity will be required. The right hon. Gentleman has taken 4d. off the Income Tax. That is equal to £10,000,000 or over, but this year the remission will mean a loss to the Exchequer of only £8,000,000. Next year the full effect of £10,000,000 will be felt. But the right hon. Gentleman has already given away, by remitting the Corn Tax, the £2,000,000 which he saves by the Income Tax remission not having its full effect this year. Where is the right hon. Gentleman going to find the extra £2,000,000 next year? Is he going to reduce expenditure? We have had that hope too long. If even the cessation of a great war does not produce a diminution of expenditure, we must not look forward to any reduction next year. He will look for the additional money required in those taxes which have the virtue of elasticity. He is not going to put the burden on property.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I distinctly stated how I should meet it. I said there was a non-recurring charge on the Army Estimates, which would considerably more than meet the deficit.

MR. ROBSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to mention that non-recurring charge?

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly. A portion of it is £2,000,000 placed on the Army Estimates for the purpose of meeting the extra demands for compensation which legitimately arose this year.

MR. ROBSON: That is a compensation in connection with the war, and is a war and not a peace expenditure. I thought the right hon. Gentleman was dealing with peace expenditure. However, if he says it is a non-recurring war expenditure, we are all very glad to hear it. But I am still rather disposed to doubt whether we shall ever see that £2,000,000 so saved. ["Why?"] Hon. Gentlemen wonder why. I remember—perhaps they have forgotten—that not long ago we discovered an expedition, of which nobody on the Front Bench knew anything, had started into the centre of Africa—an expedition which seems to have had somewhat unhappy results, one which might well have been more carefully considered, and for which more elaborate preparations might very properly have been made. Is that going to be a non-recurring expenditure, or is it, with this Ministry which never knows when a war is going to take place, to be a continually recurring expenditure? They did not know of the Jameson Raid. They did not know what Sir John Ardagh had put into his report bout the intention of the Orange Free State, although that report was lying undusted on the shelves of their offices. This is the sort of expenditure which, with such Ministers, we shall have continually recurring. We may anticipate a great deal more expenditure in the same form, and whenever additional money has to be raised we know where it is to come from. It is not to come from a tax on property; it is not to come from the burden laid on incomes—which, indeed, is already sufficiently high; it is to come from taxation on the food of the people. That is the traditional and historic policy of the Party opposite. The moment the finance of the country gets into a position of difficulty, and they find themselves embarrassed, they revert to that policy as an instinctive policy.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I have not been able clearly to follow the argument of the hon. Member for West Salford, who congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the abolition of the registration duty on corn. He said that we who represented agricultural districts would probably not agree with him because we grew corn while they in Lancashire consumed it. I should like to ask what he supposes we consume in Essex? Does he think we eat manna? We eat bread if we are lucky enough to get it; therefore we are in the same boat as the people of Lancashire. I regret the Government has seen fit to abolish the registration duty. I am not a protectionist, nor are my constituents, and this is not a protectionist tax. A protectionist tax is one which protects, one which encourages home industries and discourages imports, and this registration duty has done neither. As a matter of fact, it has done us rather more harm than good in the agricultural districts in the matter of offals. But I am not disposed to make mountains out of molehills, or to say that this is a momentous or important matter. I regret the abolition because I think the imposition of the duty showed that the Government had a pious opinion with reference to the distress in the agricultural districts, but although I regret it I shall go down to my constituents on the Corn Exchange at Chelmsford to-morrow, and meet them without the slightest diffidence, because I know they are sensible men who recognise the difference between shadow and substance, who have an acute recollection of the condition of agriculture when the right hon. Gentleman opposite was in office ten years ago, and who are not likely to kill King Charles in order to make James king.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): Many hon. Members to-night have pointed to the urgency for a reduction of expenditure, but they have seemed to hold the opinion that the only hope for reduction was in the Army Estimates. I hold the view that there is much to be done in the way of reducing expenditure in connection with our administrative Departments. To all our great administrative Departments there is what I may call a commercial side; they have frequently large amounts of commodities to buy, and in the administration of those Departments there is much money that might be saved. Let us take an illustration which has come under the notice of the Committee during the present session, showing how the heads of Departments conduct the commercial side of their offices. About a month ago we had under discussion a supplementary Estimate, containing a large additional sum to be spent on the maintenance of two steam launches. It is a small illustration, but it will suffice. The President of the Board of Trade could give the House no explanation; he knew nothing whatever about this extraordinary additional expenditure, and asked to be allowed to make an explanation on Report. That is a weak feature in the administration of Ministers; they generally know nothing about the items of expenditure which are brought under discussion, and take refuge in the Report stage. What was the explanation on this occasion? Here was a steam launch which was bought second-hand in 1874 for £590, and since that time had had spent on it by the Board of Trade no less than £2,900. Take another case. If hon. Members wish to know where the money goes

I advise them to study the Navy Appropriation Accounts of this year. What do we find there? We find that there are thousands and tens of thousands of pounds expended upon repairing vessels that ultimately have been decided to be useless, and the money spent upon them has been literally pitched into the sea. Any hon. Member who wishes to study this matter should peruse the Navy Appropriation Accounts, and then he will see for himself the great waste that is going on. Let me give another case. I felt it my duty to study the waste in the victualling of the Navy. If this Department were efficiently managed, the head of the Department ought to have discovered that the Government were carrying on the manufacture of Navy biscuits at a cost which was 41 per cent. greater than they could buy them in the open market. These are items which ought to be considered carefully by those hon. Gentlemen who are the responsible heads of this particular Department. I am perfectly certain that we shall never get a real diminution until every item of expenditure is watched as carefully as possible, and in that way alone shall we be able to reduce our expenditure.

We have been reminded quite recently by two right hon. Gentlemen, one who is still a Member of the Government, and one who recently was in the Government, that to hold a position in the Tory Administration of this country, one must have certain social distinctions. This was pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston and the Member for Bordesley, who said that to possess the aptitude of business was considered to be rather a vulgar accomplishment than otherwise by the Government. Until the Government get rid of this idea we shall never get the finances of this country upon a proper footing. I called attention to this matter last year, and I make no apology for alluding to it this year, because I believe that the more it is ventilated and discussed, the more it will be recognised by the House as a line upon which we might pursue our policy of efficiency and a reduction of expenditure. I do not propose to go into any further details to-night on the Budget because we shall have plenty of opportunities later on, but I raise these points because I think they require forcing upon the attention of the House. It is because most of the speakers have indicated that it is solely in the direction of the Army that economy can be effected that I have felt it my duty to point out another direction in which I think much can be done in the way of economical and efficient management.

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member who has just sat down has truly said that there would be many opportunities for discussing the various points which have been raised to-night and the criticisms which have been passed upon the Budget; and, therefore, I hope the Committee will consent to bring this discussion to a close and let the Government have the Resolutions, which will, of course, have to be embodied in the Finance Bill. Then there will be ample opportunity for discussing the whole question as regards principle and details.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Do you want more than one Resolution?

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes. The hon. Member will observe that there is no Resolution of a contentious character; they will all be included in the Finance Bill. It is not as if we proposed to impose any fresh taxation. We are not doing that. We are continuing existing taxation and remitting taxation, but we are not imposing taxation; and under the circumstances it is necessary to have all the Resolutions. I do not, of course, say that it is absolutely essential, but it is important for the carrying on of business. I want to point out that we shall have other opportunities of discussing all these matters of principle and detail, and I do not think that any hon. Member wants to have a general discussion on these various Resolutions, and I hope that the Committee will be content to have the discussion in the ordinary way both on the Second Reading of the Bill and in the Committee stage.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): Is this not the only opportunity we shall have for a general discussion?

*Mr. RITCHIE: No. On the Second Reading the discussion can be full and complete, just as if we were discussing the whole of these Resolutions. I desire, however, Mr. Lowther, to say a few words with regard to the criticisms which have come from both sides of the House with regard to our Budget proposals. If there is one thing that I regret more than another in connection with the proposals which I have made, it is that, so far as the proposal as to the Corn Duty is concerned, it is unacceptable to my right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division, whom I greatly regret to find in opposition to us on this point. I know how keenly he feels on this subject, and my regret, therefore, is all the greater. But, Sir, I am sure that his disappointment must have been somewhat mitigated by the reception which the proposal met with on the other side of the House. Our proposal for the remission of the Corn Duty, which, I confess, I anticipated would be acceptable to hon. Gentlemen opposite, has been received, not, perhaps, with a storm of disapproval, but, I will say, with a storm of adverse criticism. [Opposition cries of "No, no!" and "Misrepresentation."] I do not go merely by cheers. Anyone who has heard the discussion to-night cannot fail to have been struck by the extremely cold way in which the proposal was received on the other side. It is not the cheers I am talking about, but the verbal criticisms; and I think those criticisms and that attitude may go some way towards mitigating the distress which my right hon. friend feels. My right hon. friend desired that the duty should remain on, and, from a protective policy point of view, I can understand that he strongly objects to it being taken off. The duty was advocated as a broadening of the basis of taxation. In a sense, of course, the Corn Tax was a broadening of taxation, but not in the ordinary sense of the term; for, as I understand the term, it means a tax capable of increase or decrease; and in that sense it is not a broadening of taxation, because I do not myself believe it would be possible to increase the tax, except on an occasion of very great emergency, and it goes without saying that it is not possible to decrease it. From that point of view, therefore, it is not of very much value as broadening the basis of taxation. If that is so the whole thing amounts to this—we derive £2,500,000 from this particular tax, and if we retain it we must take that amount off something else—for my right hon. friend agrees that this amount of taxation should be taken off something; and he suggests tea. Even from his point of view, unless he regards it as a measure of protection, it is just as well to take it off the Corn Tax as off tea. If he knew of the variety of small matters that have to be considered in connection with the tax I am sure he would agree it is more desirable to take off this tax than to take 2d. off tea. It is on an article largely used for cattle feeding purposes, and it is a matter of complaint with farmers that the cost of feeding stuffs has increased with the imposition of the tax. My right hon. friend says it has not increased the price of bread; but that is an impossible thing to say. It is impossible for the reason that the price of corn and the price of flour, and therefore of bread, depends on a great many circumstances other than this particular tax. Therefore it is quite impossible, if there has been no actual rise, to say that the tax has had no effect on the price. Certainly I am quite sure my right hon. friend will agree with me that undoubtedly the price of flour has increased to the amount of the tax, and a good deal more; and, as a good many people make their own bread, the cost of the latter must have been increased.

A good deal has been said about direct and indirect taxation; and most of the speakers from the other side have contended that we have taken a far larger amount of money off direct taxation than we ought to have done, and that remissions should have been more equally distributed between direct and indirect taxation. Now, as my hon. friend behind me has said, when the Crimean War came to an end 75 per cent. of the whole amount remitted was taken off direct taxation and 25 per cent. only was taken off indirect taxation; so that we are strictly in accordance with precedent. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth talks of the enormous increase of the burdens we have placed on the shoulders of indirect taxpayers, I venture to tell him that the proportion of direct to indirect taxation is more in favour of the indirect taxpayer than it was when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, even after we have taken off this taxation.

Mr. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

*Mr. RITCHIE: He will find, if he examines the subject, that the proportion of indirect to direct taxation was then larger.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I would remind the right hon. Gentleman of the Death Duties.

*Mr. RITCHIE: It makes not the slightest difference; the result is the same. I contend that when the right hon. Gentleman says we are imposing a greater burden on the indirect taxpayers now than was imposed before, he is stating what is not correct. When he had charge of the nation's finances there was a larger proportion on the indirect taxpayer than we leave now.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I proposed an arrangement which increased direct as compared with indirect taxation.

*Mr. RITCHIE: That does not alter the facts of the case when the right hon. Gentleman left office. ["Oh, oh."] But I do not want to pin myself to his operations. Let him take any year previous to that and show me that the indirect taxpayer was more favourably considered than he is under our proposals. He cannot show any single year during the whole time Mr. Gladstone was in office that will compare to anything like the same extent in favour of the indirect taxpayer as that which we are now proposing. Let me also point out that when we are talking about taxation, we must remember that the local taxation account is also included; so that it is not only for Imperial purposes that this taxation is now levied, but very largely for local purposes. Therefore it may be argued that the indirect taxpayer ought fairly to be called upon to pay even a larger proportion than he is now asked to pay. Of course, we shall have plenty of opportunities of discussing that matter in Committee. Let me also point out to the Committee, what I think has been pointed out by one or more speakers already, that, when we come to talk about indirect taxation, a large proportion of this indirect taxation is purely voluntary. It is true that a certain proportion of this indirect taxation is on the necessaries of life; but a very large proportion is taxation which people may pay or not as they choose; and I am glad to think that a large proportion of the working classes do not pay this indirect taxation at all, because they refrain to a large extent from the intoxicating beverages to which hon. Gentlemen have alluded. With regard to the Sinking Fund, it has been stated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth Boroughs that the proposals I am making to the Committee to-day are a departure from the expressed intentions of my right hon. predecessor. He said—

> "You are taking a certain portion of the reduction of interest and giving it to the taxpayer. The right hon. gentleman who preceded me," the hon. Gentleman said, "stated distinctly in this House that he intended that this reduction of interest when it came about should not go to the taxpayer but should go to the Sinking Fund."

I happen to have a paper which was presented by my right hon. friend to the House on April 30th, 1899, in which these words occur—

> "To the saving to be effected by the reduction of interest on Consols in 1903 the taxpayers of the day will no doubt have an unanswerable claim, but if on that account the fixed debt charge were reduced by, say, £1,500,000, the new Sinking Fund would still stand in 1905-6 at about £7,750,000."

Consequently my right hon. friend reduced the fixed charge by £2,000,000, thereby reducing the Sinking Fund to £5,750,000, and having done that he says the taxpayer will, when this reduction of interest comes into play, have a full and good claim for remission of taxation. I do not press that, though I thought it right to allude to the fact in view of what the hon. Gentleman has said. But I base my position on the facts of the case as they stand. What are the facts of the case? In the present year immediately the Transvaal loan is floated, which I hope will be within a very short time now, we are going to repay out of that loan £4,000,000 which we advanced to the Transvaal and which will be repaid as a first charge upon this loan. Therefore within the next month we shall receive £4,000,000, which will be employed in redeeming debt, and the money hitherto required to pay interest on that amount of debt, namely, about £20,000 will of course go to the Sinking Fund. In January next we are to receive £10,000,000 more money, not out of the guaranteed loan but out of the loan which has been underwritten by the Transvaal mineowners; so that within twelve months we shall receive £14,000,000, and the interest upon that £14,000,000 will be £420,000, which will be added to the Sinking Fund part of the fixed debt charge, and by that time the amount of the fixed debt charge which is available for the extinction of the debt will be increased by nearly £500,000. In another year we shall get another £10,000,000, and the year after that we shall get a further £10,000,000; so that we are really going to put into the Sinking Fund a sum of about £1,000,000, since the debt which bears this amount of interest will be extinguished in three years. The £1,000,000 which will no longer be required for interest will remain part of the Fixed Debt Charge—that is, will be added to the Sinking Fund, so that by the time this £30,000,000 is paid we shall have a Sinking Fund of close on £9,000,000 sterling. I ask the Committee whether, under these circumstances, I should have been justified in asking the taxpayers to pay another £1,000,000 more now. The taxpayers are already heavily burdened; and I am satisfied that the Committee would have considered that I was placing a much greater burden on the existing taxpayers than I was in the least justified in doing, having regard to the circumstances I have now stated. Therefore I maintain not only that we have not actually diminished the Sinking Fund, but that we have made provision for largely increasing the Sinking Fund and bringing it up to an amount greater than it has ever been known to reach before. The right hon. Gentleman opposite gave us his usual exposition of what he considered to be the folly of our expenditure upon armaments. This is not the time to discuss that question. The right hon. Gentleman and others have asked me to-night to explain whether we propose in any way to reduce the cost of these armaments next year. What a preposterous idea it is to propose that at this stage of the Budget I should enter into the details of the Navy and Army expenditure with a view to showing how much they are to be reduced next year.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When will you?

*Mr. RITCHIE: When? Why, when the Estimates come on next year. That is the time to discuss the details of Estimates. The Budget is not the time to discuss the details of the Estimates. It is my duty to find the money for the Estimates which have been laid before the House and agreed to. I am very far from saying that it is not wise to criticise minutely this expenditure, and I am sure I should be as delighted as right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite to see it much less than it is. But it is absurd to ask me to enter into details of Army and Navy expenditure upon an occasion like this. My hon. friend the Member for Islington asked me about the Savings Banks. Well, I hope to introduce a Bill dealing with that subject; but I think it would be impossible now that it should come into operation until the beginning of the financial year of the Savings Banks. My hon. friend thinks that would entail considerable loss to the Exchequer, but I do not think this need necessarily be the case, for it may be possible to provide that whatever the loss may be should fall on the proposed Reserve Fund. But, if hon. Gentlemen think that because Consols are now so low we can afford to disregard the recommendations of the Savings Bank Committee, they are entirely mistaken. It matters not to us, so far as the Savings Banks are concerned, what the price of Consols is, except so far as new investments are concerned. A sum of £100,000,000 of Savings Banks money is invested in Consols, and we cannot sell this out. We have to be content, therefore, with the rate of interest—2½ per cent.—at present obtainable; and we cannot afford to pay the present interest to Savings Banks depositors without great loss to the general taxpayer. I do not think that the general taxpayer ought to be called upon to bear that loss; and therefore I hope that it will be possible to carry the Bill which I shall introduce. I hope, too, that we shall receive the assistance of my hon. friend in carrying it. He was a valuable Member of the Committee which inquired into the subject; and, when it is stated that the Committee mainly consisted of bankers, the Committee will believe that my hon. friend would be able to stand up against any number of bankers if he thought that the interests of the public were being prejudiced by them. I do not know that I have anything further to say. I am greatly obliged to the Committee for the kind way in which they have spoken of myself in connection with the Budget and for the consideration they have given to me, and I hope they will now agree to the necessary Resolutions.

Mr. LOUGH: I think it is not unreasonable that the matter should be brought to an issue now, and I desire to submit an Amendment to the Motion which will enable that to be done. I beg to move to reduce the Tea Duty from 6d. to 4d. Our case is, that there should have been a reduction in the Income Tax of 3d., and of 3d., only. That would have taken £6,500,000 and left £4,000,000 for the relief of indirect taxation, and this should have been applied to a reduction of the Tea Duty by 2d. and the abolition of the Corn Duty. Not one of the advocates for a reduction in the Income Tax asked for a greater reduction than 3d., and the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he proposed to reduce the Income Tax by 4d. came as a complete surprise. The right hon. Gentleman has thrown a most valuable light on the principle which guided him in this matter. He told us that he took the precedent of the Crimean War, at the end of which 75 per cent. was taken off direct taxation, and 25 per cent. only was taken off indirect taxation. The answer I make to that is, that many things have happened since the Crimean War. We have had the Reform Act of 1867 and the Act of 1885, and the class of the population on whom these indirect taxes fall are now represented in Parliament, whereas in the years referred to they were unable to make their voices heard. In a speech a week ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer adumbrated this new policy of sticking to the indirect taxes that were imposed during the war, of maintaining them as a continual burden on the people and giving all the relief to the direct taxpayers.

*Mr. RITCHIE: What I said was that this deputation came to me and asked me to so regulate the finances of the country as to give a free breakfast table. That was the proposal made to me and to which my observations were addressed.

Mr. LOUGH: Many of us would like to see a free breakfast table. We are not ashamed of the demand, or of the policy which embodies it; and, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer argued before this deputation, and before this Committee to-day, in favour of almost confining his relief to direct taxation, so we wish to argue in favour of the claims of the indirect taxpayer who we think is being cheated in this year's Budget. These taxes were imposed equally on direct and indirect taxpayers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had tried to make out that the Coal Tax was not an indirect tax. That is not fair. Surely it cannot be denied that it is an indirect tax.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Not on the consumer.

Mr. LOUGH: I am not on that point. It is only fair that I should be allowed to take one point at a time. We are speaking of direct and indirect taxation, as generally understood, and we say that it is merely playing with words to suggest that the Coal Tax is not an indirect tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, has left it out of the indirect taxes in order to make out his case that more money has been raised by direct taxation than by indirect taxation. We know the figures, and we say that there is scarcely any difference in the way the taxes were imposed. What we demand is that, inasmuch as you made both classes pay equally, so, when the remission comes, you should give it to both classes equally. We contend that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a most unfair one on this broad ground, and also on one other ground that I will venture to mention. There was a plain road open before the right hon. Gentleman, but with many ingenious arguments he has taken the wrong road. I desire to submit one final argument in support of this proposal; it is with regard to the Tea Tax. Growers of tea put their case before the Chancellor of the Exchequer with great moderation. They stated that they had patiently borne the burden placed upon them, and that, in the first year this additional tax was levied, they paid half the tax out of their own pocket, and suffered a great loss in consequence. The area of tea-growing being diminished, the consequence now is that there is a certain shortage of tea, and the increased price which has followed has had to be borne by the consumer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the tea duty was a small duty, but it is a duty of at least 75 per cent. on the price of the raw material. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also said that tea was not a necessity; again I disagree with him. We think it would have been far better for the Government, and far more to the credit of this House, if the remission had been made in the same way as the taxes were imposed. I beg to move to reduce the Tea Duty from 6d. to 4d.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Six,' and insert the word 'Four.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question put, "That the word 'Six' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 184; Noes, 76. (Division List, No. 68.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Lord
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. *Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gore, Hn G. R. C Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(*Linc.*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, Henry D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N. R.*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks. N. R.*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col, Charles W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.

M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (*Wigt'n*
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*)
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*)
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H. C (*North'mb. Tyneside*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Ox'fd Univ.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (*Edinburgh*)
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Helme, Norval Watson
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (*Accrington*
Leng, Sir John
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Norman, Henry
Partington, Oswald
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, J. A. (*Glam., Gower*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, F. W. (*Norfolk, Mid*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. Causton.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased Duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, 1904."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN asked what were the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the othert Resolutions. There were other two which were obviously deserving of discussion—one referring to the Income Tax, and the other referring to the Sinking Fund. Although everything had been done with perfect regularity by suspending the Twelve O'clock Rule because there might be taxes to be imposed, and because it was necessary to safeguard the interest of the Exchequer, he thought it was not the usual practice at all to proceed the same night with any Resolution affecting a tax which was not of that character. The Committee had only heard to-night for the first time of the proposals with regard to these taxes, and he thought it was only due to them that they should have time to look into them cautiously and to consider what conclusion they would form upon them. Therefore he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not to take the two Resolutions to which he referred.

*MR. RITCHIE said he could not resist the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman, but at the same time he thought that, having regard to the fact that there would be opportunities for full discussion of the proposals on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill, he thought they might fairly expect to have these Resolutions to-night. They differed somewhat from the ordinary Resolutions to which the right hon. Gentleman referred; the Budget Resolutions as a rule were for imposing taxation, but none of these Resolutions imposed taxation. Some of them proposed reductions in taxation. He was not prepared to contest the matter, and if the right hon. Gentleman pressed him not to take these two Resolutions he would consent to adopt that course.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said the usual course was for the Chancellor of the Exchequer in laying the Budget Resolutions before the House to give his explanation of them. Of course time ought to be allowed for the consideration of the Resolutions; they ought to be subjected to careful examination. When Resolutions on the Budget were passed the same night, it was for the purpose of protecting the Exchequer. But when the Resolutions would not affect the interests of the Exchequer it was not necessary to proceed with them the same night.

MR. LOUGH said that what was now proposed to be done was a new precedent which had only sprung up in the last year or two in the emergency of the war. He recollected quite well the time when only one Resolution was taken on the Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had got that Resolution, and members of the Committee had been kept there for ten hours during which the right hon. Gentleman had done most of the talking himself. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press the other Resolutions.

*MR. RITCHIE said he was very wishful to continue the discussion in the same amicable spirit in which it had been carried on, and as he did not wish to disturb the harmony of their proceedings he would agree to the request.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS.)

Return ordered, "of all Inclosure Awards or Copies of Inclosure Awards which are at the present time deposited or enrolled with the Clerks of the Peace or of the Councils of the Counties of England and Wales, setting out alphabetically under the head of each county the name of each Common affected by an Award, the parish or township in which each such Common was situated, and stating the date of the Act of Parliament authorising the Inclosure and the date of the Award."—(*Sir John Brunner.*)

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 24th April, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.—

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill). Ordered that the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.—

Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill. Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

London Hydraulic Power Bill; Maidstone Gas Bill; Midland Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill. As amended, considered; A Clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

City and South London Railway Bill. As amended, considered; A Clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Romford and District Tramways Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).

The Chairman of Ways and Means informed the House: That the Committee on Group C. of Private Bills not being appointed to meet until Tuesday next the Parties promoting the Commercial Gas Bill, which was set down for consideration upon the first day of the meeting of the Committee, had appeared before him and proved that the evidence of Professor Vivian Lewes, of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and Dr. Clowes, Chemist, and Gas Examiner to the London County Council, was essential to their case, and that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That Professor Vivian Lewes and Dr. Clowes do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills on Tuesday next, at half-past eleven o'clock.

Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) (Re-Committed) Bill and Great Eastern Railway (No. 2) Bill (Consolidated into the "Great Eastern Railway Bill").

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Kippax Glass Houghton; Featherstone Main; Donisthorpe; Church Gresley; Halls; Cartwright; Cudley Hill; and, Atherton Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Plymouth; Oswestry; Ealing; Stratford-upon-Avon; Scarborough; and, Leamington Spa; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

DESTITUTE ADULT BLIND.

Petition from Leith, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Fraserburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from the Royal, Parliamentary, and Police Burghs of Scotland, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.

Petition of the Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petitions against: from Banbury; Plymouth (two); and, Southampton; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from North Berwick; Kilmarnock; Crail; and, Eassie; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Glasgow; and, Kilmarnock; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Oban, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.

Petition of the Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Paisley; Possilpark; Granton; Leith (three); Glasgow; and, Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions for alteration of law: from Stretford; Exeter; Leamington Spa; Brierley Hill; Sittingbourne; and, Kilmarnock; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from East Ashford, against; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petitions against establishment: from Helensburg; and, Alexandria; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Bournemouth; and, Windsor; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Hulme; and, Bradford; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Kippax; Wheldale; Glass Houghton; Featherstone Main; Donisthorpe; Church Gresley; Halls; Swadlincote; Cartwright; Cadley Hill; Atherton; and, Chickenley Heath Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition of the Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA (No. 2, 1903).

Copy presented, of correspondence relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the British Central Africa Protectorate for employment in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Education Act, 1892—Schedule 2 (22).

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state to what extent the County Councils will have, under the provisions of Schedule 2 (22) of the Education Act, 1892, to credit school board parishes with part of the first Parliamentary grants paid to the councils in respect of the former board schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am advised that a County Council should credit the parishes in the district of a school board with that proportion of the grants referred to which accrues in respect of any period before the date when the school boards are abolished.

Retiring Pensions of Indian Judges.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to the fact that the Government of India has granted an assignment of Land Revenue of the value of 5,000 rupees per annum to a Vakil judge of the High Court of Madras, who was appointed in 1901 on the condition that he would retire from the bench at the age of sixty-five; and whether he will explain why this judge has been so rewarded, and consider the advisability of directing that European judges, members of the High Court of Madras, shall be treated in a similar manner by giving them grants based upon Land Revenue in addition to their retiring pensions.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I am aware of the assignment of Land Revenue referred to in the Question, which was granted to the judge with my sanction for exceptional public services, and also in view of the fact that, in accepting an office in which he could not serve long enough to earn a pension, he abandoned a lucrative practice at the Bar. These reasons were personal to the judge, Sir Bháshyam Aiyanger, and do not apply to the cases referred to in the last sentence of the Question.

Sanitary Arrangements at Ilford Sorting Office.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the Ilford Sorting Office, at which forty men are employed, contains no lavatory accommodation; and whether steps will be taken to investigate the sanitary condition of this building with a view to effecting necessary alterations, if any.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I will make further inquiries about the temporary office now in use pending the erection of a new post office.

Carriage of Stores to South Africa.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if tenders are publicly invited for the carriage of Government stores to South Africa from all British steamship companies trading with that country.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have no control over stores shipped for the self-governing Colonies of the Cape and Natal, but the Crown Agents are under my instructions, taking steps to call for public tenders for the transport of freight for the Colonial Governments of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and for the Central South African Railways after July next.

CHEAP TRAINS BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Tuesday 21st July, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

[Order for Second Reading read.]

*MR. BUTCHER (York) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill said he was quite aware that he was attempting a problem of unusual complexity, but he was encouraged by the thought that on the main principles underlying this Bill there was a large measure of agreement among many sections of public opinion. With regard to the details of the Bill, he founded himself on an authoritative basis by following the lines laid down by the Majority Report of Lord Peel's Commission. The question of providing compensation to holders of licences who, through no fault or misconduct of their own, were deprived of these licences was a question which was not new either in the House or in the country. Owing to circumstances which it was needless to advert to in detail, the question had now entered a critical stage, and it was essential in the interest of Temperance reform, and in the interest of fairness to the members of a legalised trade, that some solution should be forthcoming. He did not propose to go into the discussion, necessarily controversial, of all the causes which had led to this urgency. Such a discussion would be interesting, but he would content himself with pointing to two main facts, on which there would be no difference of opinion. The first fact was that there was at this moment in this country a considerable consensus of opinion in favour of a substantial reduction of licensed houses in the country. On this point Lord Peel's Commission was practically unanimous. As to the effect of the reduction there might be difference of opinion. There were those who maintained that such a reduction would necessarily lead to a large diminution in the consumption of liquor; there were others who maintained the contrary on this point. He was satisfied with the conclusion which, after careful examination of the evidence, was arrived at by the majority of Lord Peel's Commission. They reported that it was not certain that a large decrease of licensed houses would result in much diminution in the consumption of liquor, but that a reduction was necessary for the due control of the remainder by the police and because the character of the premises and the status of the publican would be thereby improved. That was the first point. The second point was this. While public opinion favoured a substantial reduction of licences, there was a strong, deep and widespread feeling that, if it was done, it should be done without any unfairness or injustice. As one who ardently desired a diminution of drunkenness and its appalling evils, he said that unless this House could discover and sanction some scheme by which the reduction of licences could be effected without any unfairness, hardship, or injustice, the current of public opinion which ran at present in favour of such a reduction would not only be arrested but might be turned in its course in the opposite direction. This brought him to the cardinal principle of the Bill, which was that where it was desired in the public interest to suppress a licence and there was no fault or misconduct on the part of the licence holder, compensation must be provided. That was the main principle on which he based the Bill, and to which he asked the House to assent. On that point there was a wide-spread concurrence of opinion, but let him take, in the first instance, the Majority Report of the Commission. That Report affirmed in the most decisive manner the principle of compensation on the ground both of justice and expediency, and he need hardly remind the House that the Report bore, among other honoured signatures, the names of so capable and experienced a man of business as Sir Algernon West, and so ardent a temperance reformer as Dean Dickinson. He turned to the Minority Report, and he found that, like the Majority Report, it affirmed the principle of compensation, although he admitted that the compensation it proposed was of a considerably different character. But on the question of principle they were agreed, and he might remind the House that the Minority Report was signed not only by Lord Peel himself but also by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and by so highly respected a Member of this House and so convinced a temperance reformer as the late Mr. W. S. Caine. It also bore the name of his hon. friend the Member for Spen Valley. On this point he claimed him as an ally and supporter, although to his considerable disappointment he had given notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill.

He would endeavour to show why that principle must be accepted. In the first place these existing licences which it was proposed to suppress had been called into existence by the action of the magistrates themselves—the very body who were now proposing to cancel them. Not only so, but the houses had been built on plans approved by the magistrates for the express purpose of obtaining the grant of licences, and in many cases large structural alterations had been made at the express request of the magistrates themselves and for the express purpose of continuing the grant to them of the licences. Was it to be said now that the expense which had been incurred with the concurrence and sanction of the magistrates was to be confiscated without any compensation whatever? Another point was that, although according to the strict letter of the law licences were granted for one year only, it was equally true that by custom of long standing—and custom of long standing in this country often gave a moral sanction almost as great as the sanction of positive law — the licenses of houses had from year to year been renewed by the justices, almost as a matter of course, where there was no misconduct or fault on the part of the licence holders. Vast sums of money had been invested in that faith and on that footing. There was another argument, and to his mind possibly the strongest argument of all, and that was that for a number of years past the State had collected Death Duties upon the full value of licensed houses based upon the supposition and the expectation that these licences would be renewed. How now could the State, with any regard for decency and justice, turn round and say that this property which they themselves had recognised, and on which they had levied millions of taxation in the past, was no longer property at all, but might be swept out of existence without a moment's warning? That action would be more worthy of a band of marauders than of a civilised State. It was put forward as a terrible fact to face that if compensation was admitted, they were creating a vested interest in the licence. He was not in the least afraid of any form of words provided that they understood what the meaning of them was. And when it was understood that the meaning of his Bill was to provide compensation for persons who, owing to no fault of their own, lost their livelihood under circumstances such as he had suggested, he was not in the least afraid of commending that as a principle which should be sanctioned by this House. Might he remind hon. Members of what some of them might not be unaware, that in Ireland at the present moment the justices had no power to deprive licence holders of their licences, unless there was fault or misconduct; and he for his part had never been able to understand why licence holders in this country, so long as they conducted their trade in a lawful manner, should be placed in a worse or inferior position to the holders of licences in Ireland. He therefore claimed with regard to the principle of compensation that they had an unanswered and an unanswerable case.

As regards the amount of compensation, he held that it was idle to propose a nominal or illusory compensation. The compensation must be proportionate to the loss suffered. In this matter he was fortified by the unanimous finding of the Majority Report of the Commission, which held that when a licence was suppressed without misconduct they must pay by way of compensation a full and fair market value of the licence and goodwill incident to it.

That brought him to another question, namely, from what sources this compensation could be drawn. There were two sources, and, in fact, only two main sources, from which it was proposed to draw this compensation fund. The first was by means of a direct contribution of the trade itself, and the second was by means of contributions out of the direct taxation of liquor. He did not propose to enter into any lengthy argument on this matter. He founded himself, as he was bound to do as a private Member, on the Majority Report, which proposed that the fund should be entirely raised by means of contributions of the trade itself. He did not wish to exclude from the future consideration of Parliament, if it were so minded, the question of providing compensation, in part at any rate, out of the direct taxation of liquor, and therefore he had inserted a provision in the Bill to the effect that, if Parliament hereafter should decide to devote sums for that purpose out of direct taxation of liquor, these sums should be applied in reduction of the contributions of the trade. He need hardly say that in that provision he did not desire or intend in any way to bind the future action of Parliament. The object of that provision was simply and merely to leave open for future consideration of this House the question whether or not Parliament should make any such grant out of the taxation of liquor. But as the Bill stood it provided simply for contributions by direct payment of the trade itself.

Now he came to a point which was a vital and essential point of the Bill, and that was that there must be some limitation of the number of licences to be suppressed by the magistrates in any single year. How did the matter stand? Whether compensation came from taxation or contributions of the trade, the amount collected in a given year must be a limited amount. He regarded that as axiomatic. Therefore he said it necessarily followed, admitting the principle of compensation and admitting that the fund available for compensation must be limited in amount, there must be a limit to the number of licences suppressed in any given year. It might be objected that this would prevent a wholesale reduction of licences in any given year. That was true. What the Bill would ensure was the raising of a fund of large amount —a fund which, according to the Estimates placed before the Royal Commission, would be £500,000 a year. It proposed to devote that sum to the suppression of licences, and in that way there would be a gradual and steady reduction which should satisfy the reasonable aspirations of any temperance reformer. In regard to this point he would, no doubt, be told by his hon. friend opposite that while he was in favour of the principle of compensation he would not tolerate any limitation of the power of the justices for the suppression of licences. If it were the intention of the hon. Member to leave an unlimited power of suppression in the hands of the justices, and the justices should exercise that power, then the hon. Gentleman was bound to provide an unlimited compensation fund; and he was entitled to ask the hon. Member where he was going to get it from.

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley): The trade.

*MR. BUTCHER said that the hon. Member would then tax the trade out of existence. There was no alternative. If his hon. friend would suggest a method by which, without hardship and injustice, an unlimited fund could be raised from a limited class he would be the greatest benefactor the world had ever seen; he would have solved a problem which had hitherto passed the wit of man to solve. If the principle of compensation were adopted, and if that compensation were to be drawn from a limited class, then it logically followed that they must carry out that object with the means at their disposal, and limit the number of licences which were to be suppressed in any one year to the amount of compensation then available.

These were the general principles which underlay his Bill. The rest of the Bill was devoted to providing the machinery for carrying out his object. In the first place, for the purposes of the Bill, the county was divided into areas, and these areas would be counties and county boroughs. In each area there would be a compensation authority, and a reduction authority. The duty of the compensation authority would be to collect the compensation fund which was payable in their area, and to decide from time to time how much compensation would be available for the reduction of the licences in that area. The compensation authority for each county would be the standing joint committee, and for each borough a similarly constituted authority. The reduction authority would in each county be the County Licensing Committee, and in each county borough the Licensing Committee. The duty of the reduction authority would be to allocate within their area the compensation fund at their disposal for the suppression of such licences which they thought should be suppressed. He might point out to the House that by dealing with an area of considerable extent, such as he proposed, that would enable the discretion which would be placed in the hands of the reduction authority to be properly exercised. No doubt, in the first instance, they would try to suppress licensed houses the premises of which were insanitary and of an unsatisfactory character, and consequently of comparatively small value. Then, as to the contributions to be made from the trade, he proposed to follow, in the main, the lines laid down in the Majority Report of the Royal Commission. He proposed these contributions should be drawn from three main sources. The first source was an annual payment of 6s. 8d. per £100 of the capital value of the licensed house. This would be paid by the owner and the occupier according to their ascertained interest in the premises. Before he left this point he might state that the owner would pay his contribution proportionate to his share in the value of the licence, and the occupier would pay his proportionate share; and if the licence was suppressed both the owner and occupier would get compensation in proportion to what they had to pay. Then the second source from which he proposed to get these contributions was from an annual rental from new licences. It had been recognised for many years that there was a certain objection to granting a new licence which was in the nature of a valuable property, without payment; and he proposed to get over that by providing that when a new licence was applied for, the applicant should send in a tender of the licensed rent he was prepared to pay. And no doubt in most cases the highest tenderer would get the licence, and the proceeds would go to the Compensation Fund. The third source from which he proposed to get funds was in accordance with the recommendation of the Majority Report of the Royal Commission, viz., a sixteenth of the annual value of hotels and restaurants. He wished to say one word as to the method of determining the value of a licence. The plan he had chosen to follow was this. The owner of licensed premises and the licence holder would be required at triennial periods to declare the value of the licence to both respectively, and the value so declared would be the basis both for the purpose of taxation or contribution, and for the purpose of compensation being received if the licence were suppressed. So that, on the one hand, there would be a tendency to put the declared value low for the purpose of taxation, and to put it high for the purpose of compensation. The probability was that in the majority of cases the declared value would be a fair one; but there was a provision in the Bill by which, if the authority was not satisfied with the value declared, the question would be submitted to arbitration.

In asking the House to sanction the Second Reading of the Bill he would ask the support on the one hand of those who desired to prevent injustice to the members of a legalised trade, as long as they carried on that trade without default or breach of the law; and on the other hand, of those moderate temperance reformers who preferred gradual, steady progress with success, to intemperate haste with failure, and who would be glad to see a steady, gradual, and substantial reduction of licences, provided that that reduction was not accompanied by harsh injustice. He claimed support for this Bill, which he recommended to the House on the broad principle of compensation, because it would prevent the perpetration of injustice, such as was possible under the present system, to persons carrying on a lawful trade which they were entitled to carry on as long as they did no wrong and committed no breach of the law or the law's requirements. He claimed support for the Bill in that it would prevent that perpetual and inevitable friction and strife, which would always arise if they attempted to suppress licences accompanied by injustice. Lastly, he claimed support for the Bill on the ground that it would, without doing injustice to anyone, enable the authorities to make that gradual and steady reduction of licensed houses which was necessary, and which, in the opinion of temperance reformers, and others who desired to see a sober population, would ultimately enure to the advantage and benefit of the country as a whole. He begged to move "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Motion made, and Question proposed :—"That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Butcher.*)

*MR. T. P. WHITTAKER said he joined with the hon. Member for York in expressing his desire—and he was sure the desire of all temperance reformers and reasonable people—that no injustice should be done to the trade, and also that no injustice should be done to the public. They had heard in recent speeches a good deal about injustice to the trade, but very little in regard to justice or injustice to the public. It was quite possible to do more than justice to one in such a way as to do less than justice to another. They must really protect the interests of the public. It was the interest of temperance people to see that no injustice was done to the trade, for that would much facilitate the carrying out of what they wished to see accomplished. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill had admitted that it was desirable that there should be a considerable reduction in the number of public houses. He knew that some people contended that that would not promote temperance or check intemperance; but he was prepared to demonstrate that the number of public houses did very materially affect the amount of drunkenness in the community. He would make a few very brief quotations from the speeches of gentlemen whose opinion was worthy of weight. He would first read the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, given in his evidence before the Lords' Commission on Intemperance. That right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The enormous number of public houses, which is clearly out of all proportion to anything like the legitimate wants of the people, must tend to increase the temptation."

Speaking in 1888, when he introduced his Local Government Bill to a deputation which waited upon him at the Local Government Board, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "I do not suppose there is any man in this kingdom who can shut his eyes to the fact that there are far more licences in existence than are required."

And in 1890 Lord Randolph Churchill in introducing his Licensing Bill to this House said—

> "Now, if, as I hold, the number of public houses is largely and grossly in excess of the legitimate wants of the people, what does that mean? I hold that it brings responsibility home to all of us in this House, and it means that Parliament and the State, by allowing such a condition of things to exist, force upon the people the consumption of alcoholic liquor, which, without such pressure, would not be consumed. The system of reckless profusion in the sale of alcoholic liquor, and the fatal facility to have recourse to the public houses makes it extremely difficult for multitudes of persons, in view of the hardship of their lives, to avoid or resist intemperance."

He commended that expression of opinion to hon. Gentlemen opposite. Again, in the same year, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "We think the number of public houses is too great, and that the excessive number promotes drunkenness."

He would also quote the opinion of the House itself, which in 1891 passed the following Resolution—

> "That, provided adequate compensation be given, this House is of opinion that a large reduction in the number of houses in England licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor is desirable."

The extraordinary anomalies and variations in the number of public houses which existed up and down the country indicated that in many places there were more licensed houses than were required. He would take as an illustration two towns of the same name in different parts of the country. In St. Ives in Huntingdonshire there was one licensed house to every fifteen houses, whereas, in St. Ives in Cornwall there was one licensed house to every 142 houses. If the latter number was sufficient for Cornwall why should one licensed house in every fifteen be required in Huntingdonshire? He could give a number of illustrations based on population, which showed a similar result.

Then there was the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission, to which additional weight should be given, because as hon. Members were aware it was somewhat peculiarly constituted, and when they found strong Temperance reformers and persons deeply financially interested in the liquor trade together with a number of other gentlemen of experience all agreeing, there was something to be said for their unanimous recommendation. The Majority Report, which was signed by the eight representatives of the liquor trade said, "We regard a large suppression of licences as essential." He did not propose to discuss the legal position; he would only point out that the law was perfectly clear, and, not only was it clear now, but it always had been clear. The decision in Sharp *v.* Wakefield was not new; the law was known long before that, and indeed the power to take away licences was the bedrock foundation of our licensing system. The original Act passed in Parliament in 1495 gave to the justices power to suppress licences, and gave them no other power. That was the very beginning of the system. Up to that any person could sell liquor, and the very beginning of the licensing system was the power which was given to justices to put away alehouses wherever they thought proper. That power was never taken away from the justices of this land. It was not until 1552 that the first Licensing Act was passed. The first Act gave the power of suppressing alehouses, and the second prohibited any person from selling liquor who had not obtained a licence. The fundamental basis of the system was the power to put away licences whenever the justices considered it expedient. Then in the Act of 1828 it was clearly recognised that the justices had the absolute power of suppressing licences for any reason that might seem to them to be sufficient. He would quote in support of that statement the opinion of Lord Brougham given in the year the Act was passed. He attached all the more importance to Lord Brougham's opinion because he did not agree that justices should have that full power, and what he said showed that he knew justices had such a power. He said—

> "Justices have everything at their absolute discretion, and no one has any control over them in these matters. In the first place they have the privilege of granting or withholding licences. As we all know, it lies in the breast of two justices of the peace to give or refuse this important privilege. It is in their absolute power to give a licence to one of the most unfit persons possible, and it is in their power to refuse a licence to one of the most fit persons possible. They may continue a licence to some person who has had it for twelve months, and who, during that period, has made his house a nuisance to the whole of the neighbourhood, or they may take away a licence from a house to which it has been attached for a century, and the enjoyment of which has not only been attended by no evil, but has been productive of great public benefit."

He merely read that to show that in 1828 it was clearly known that justices had the full power which they had recently been exercising. Then it was well known that there had been numerous legal decisions. Twenty years before the Sharp *v.* Wakefield case there was the case of The Queen *v.* The Justices of Lancashire. Mr. Justice Lush, in the course of his judgment, said that—

> "The words of the Act authorised and therefore by implication required the justices to govern their discretion, in granting or withholding the licence, by reference not only to the qualification of the person applying, and to the suitableness of the house, but to other considerations also. Those considerations must include the nature of the locality, the population, the number of houses already licensed, and all other circumstances bearing on the question whether it is fit and proper, in the interest of the public for whose benefit these Acts are passed that an additional licence should be granted."

Mr. Nash, barrister-at-law and counsel to the Licensed Victuallers' Association, in the letter he wrote to the *Morning Advertiser* in 1883, pointed out that it had long been held that the justices possessed full powers. During the hearing of the Dover case in the House of Lords in 1897 it was clearly laid down that the justices were entitled, and should act on their own judgment and not merely on the evidence brought before them. They did not sit as a Court to decide between two parties, they sat to administer the law, and any evidence submitted to them was for the purpose of informing their minds and assisting them in their decision. On that occasion Lord Herschell said—

> "When a man applies for a licence and the court have absolute discretion, it is for them to determine if nobody appears and opposes."

Lord Watson said—

> "The justice is exercising a discretionary power in the interests of the public, and he is not only entitled, but according to my impression and opinion he is bound to exercise his discretion according to the state of his mind and according to what he believes to be the truth, whether it has been communicated to him by the objector or no."

Lord Watson gave the following illustration—

> "A justice of peace sitting at the special Licensing Sessions may have walked down the street and found thirty public houses in it. I do not see why he should not come to the

> conviction and act on the conviction that twenty public houses were enough, and that thirty were too many."

The clearest proof of the full discretion of justices in this matter was to be found in the position of the 1869 beer-houses, the licences of which could only be taken away on four specific grounds, which were practically the grounds that would apply if the justices had no power to take away licences simply because they were not required. That clearly showed that the justices had wider powers with regard to other licences; if they had not there would be no necessity for protecting the 1869 beer-houses.

But if licences were refused on grounds which were not within the four corners of the law, surely the law courts provided a remedy. It was suggested that there was a risk of injustice, and a risk that the justices would use their power arbitrarily and unjustly. They who looked forward to a reduction in the number of licences felt that the risk was all the other way. Then there was an appeal to Quarter Sessions. Surely that was a substantial protection. Between 1892 and 1896 there were in England and Wales 476 appeals to Quarter Sessions, of which 248 were successful. That meant that the Quarter Sessions reversed the decision of the local bench in more than half the cases, and that justices who did not know the locality concerned, or the people, or the particular house, reversed the decision of the justices who did know. The Quarter Sessions hung like millstone round the neck of the efficient administration of the licensing law. The prejudice was all in favour of the licence holder. Take an illustration. It was curious how few cases were brought against publicans for supplying intoxicated persons with drink, as compared with the enormous number of people who were arrested for drunkenness. That was peculiar; but what was more peculiar was that of the cases which were brought, in an enormous proportion of them there was a failure to secure a conviction. Were they to understand that the police, when they were prosecuting a publican were less reliable and less careful than when they were prosecuting any other person. He assumed, and believed, that they were quite as reliable, and quite as capable. What brought the Bill before the House? It was simply because there was an awakening of the public conscience of the country, an arousing of public feeling which had at last made itself felt on the licensing benches. He was glad that the justices were responding to that feeling, and were doing something, in a small way it was true, to make up for their gross neglect in the past. He could only express his regret that when there was such an awakening of public feeling, the Prime Minister of this land should have thought it worthy of hmself to lecture, and practically to try to bully and intimidate magistrates because they were fulfilling the duties imposed on them. He would compare the remarks of the Prime Minister with those made many years ago by Lord Coventry, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England in 1637, who in his address by command of the King to all the judges of assizes in England, on the 17th of June, 1635, made some reference to this licensing matter. He said—

> "The next thing I shall mention unto you is alehouses. I account alehouses and tippling houses the greatest pests in the Kingdom. I give it you in charge to take a course that none be permitted unless they are licensed. As for the licensed alehouses, let them be few and in fit places. If they be in private corners and ill-places they become the den of thieves—they are the public stages of drunkenness and disorder. Let care be taken in the choice of alehouse keepers, that it be not appointed to be the livelihood of a large family."

He then went on to explain that large families might be expected to push the trade, and continued—

> "In many places they [alehouses] swarm by default of the justices of the peace, that set up too many. . . . If the justices will not obey your words therein, certify their default and their names, and I assure you they shall be discharged."

He thought Lord Keeper Coventry set the Prime Minister an example he might well have taken, in urging the justices to do their duty.

These men had no legal claim to compensation. The holder of a licence; the owner of a house; the purchaser of a licensed property, knew the risk when he bought the house and when he took the licence. He knew the law and the risk, and further was reminded of the risk in the most formal manner, because every year he had to apply for sanction to ask for the renewal of the licence. He was like an annual tenant to some extent, but an annual tenant had not to ask for a renewal of his tenancy every year. He ventured and speculated on the risk of a renewal. He took a special risk, and there was a special profit attached to the trade, the proof of which was the enormous value that attached to the houses in which the trade was carried on. Every buyer of a house purchased it with his eyes open to that fact, but he wanted to have the profits of a risky trade with the security of Consols. He could not have that security. He was alleged to have a claim because death duties were levied on the value of a licence, but the Death Duties were levied on the market value of all the property a man left. There was no investigation of the basis or the reasonableness of that value in any shape or form, and if people chose to put an exorbitant value on licences, old china, or anything else, the revenue authorities would collect the Death Duties on that value. It only showed that the public had put this value on these licences, it did not imply that the value was a real or a wise one. There was no case for compensation under the present law. There was a risk, but it was an insurable risk, as was shown by the prospectus of the Licence Insurance and Guarantee Society, a copy of which he held in his hand. They sometimes heard about the butler or the widow who had invested their savings in a public house, whose risk might be covered at a cost of £5 a year, but they did not hear of the other people, tenants of the brewers, who were turned out directly the money they had invested was gone. There was far more loss inflicted on those people in one year than had been inflicted in twenty years by the action of the licensing justices. If there was to be genuine compensation owing to the operation of the ordinary law as it now stood, why was this Bill brought in to put it on the trade? If there was a claim for compensation it should be a genuine liability of the nation, and not levied on a particular trade. The fact was that all the supporters of this Bill knew there was no genuine legal claim. Why? Because it put a levy on the trade to provide the money. They did not call upon a man who had a legitimate claim to compensate himself. It was not necessary to argue the point, because when a body of men proposed that they should give money to somebody else, the House might depend upon it there was good reason for it. The representatives of the trade on the Royal Commission, six out of eight, signed a recommendation providing that the money required for compensation should come out of their own pockets. That was not compensation in the ordinary sense of the word, that was merely a system of mutual insurance, and under the present law there was no need for legislative action. Cases of hardship no doubt arose when the renewal of a licence was refused, but it was an insurable risk at a reasonable premium, and therefore there was no reason for the legislature to step in.

He might be reminded that he had signed Lord Peel's Report. For definite reform, for a considerable reduction in the number of licences, he thought it might be worth while as a matter of expediency and of grace to facilitate the trade in arriving at some scheme of mutual compensation or insurance under the sanction of the law, but not as a right, purely for the convenience and the benefit of the trade itself. Let the State aid them if that be the position, because, with a large reduction in the number of licensed houses, he quite admitted difficulties might arise. If they were to abolish a considerable number of these houses, simply on the ground that they were not required, he had always felt that licensing justices would be in a position of great difficulty, because if they took away the licences from a considerable number of houses they would inflict a considerable loss on the owners of them, whilst, on the other hand, they would give a substantial pecuniary benefit to the owners of the houses that were left. The justices had nothing to enable them to decide which houses should go, and the matter of selection became very difficult, and in order to facilitate the reduction of licences he was perfectly willing to get at some system whereby the State should facilitate the trade in making this scheme of mutual insurance for the reason that with a more speedy reduction of licences there is no doubt that the risk would become uninsurable. It would be very much like asking an insurance company to insure the lives of patients in a consumption hospital; of course, they would not do it. He would be willing, therefore, that Parliament should pass an enactment which would make payment of the mutual insurance premium compulsory on all houses. It was desirable that the policy of a mutual insurance scheme should be passed, in order to spread the risk over the whole trade. A difficulty they had to meet was that the largest houses, those which represented the most valuable property, would not pay the premium, if it were left a voluntary matter, because they knew that in their case the risk was slight. The rates of premium were lower for the larger houses than for the smaller ones. In the case of the former the premium was at the rate of 4s. per cent.; in the case of the latter it was from 15s. upwards, and if the big houses were called upon to pay a big premium they would undoubtedly decline to insure, and there could thus be no equitable levy of the insurance premium without the assistance of the law. But if they went in for this mutual insurance policy, it must be on the understanding that the object was to facilitate a reduction in the number of licences. The hon. and learned Member for York had stated that the object of his Bill was to facilitate such a reduction, and he had told them in the memorandum attached to the Measure that it would bring about such a result. Now, undoubtedly, a reduction was required, and it was an essential condition of any scheme of mutual insurance being taken up and sanctioned by the State that such a Reduction should be promoted.

He had the pleasure a short time ago of attending a Conference summoned by Sir Ralph Littler, and attended by a very large number of chairmen of Quarter Sessions and other gentlemen, almost all of whom held views very different from his own. At that Conference they passed a Resolution to the following effect—

> "That in order to facilitate a considerable reduction of licences where such reduction seems desirable, this conference is of opinion that provision should be made for compensating all interests in licensed property dispossessed, otherwise than for misconduct, from a fund raised by the trade from excisable liquors."

Therefore he asserted that the essential condition attaching to any Parliamentary sanction for a mutual insurance scheme among the trade must be first that the trade must pay everything that was required, and second, that free scope must be given for a great reduction in the number of houses. The money must come from the trade, and full and absolute power must be given to the justices, or anybody else to whom Parliament might from time to time entrust the power of dealing with licences, to reduce the number of licences, or to abolish them altogether if they should think fit to do so. The levy to be made on the trade must be guided by the reduction and fixed by the reduction; the reduction must not be fixed, as in this Bill, by the levy. The Bill made a miserable paltry levy, and so tied the hands of the justices that they could not get rid of licences unless there was money enough in the levy to buy them out. It was an essential principle that the levy should be fixed by the reduction, and not the reduction by the levy. It was also essential that nothing should be done to block the way for future reduction; the way should be left perfectly open for Parliament to pass any other measure of temperance reform that might at any time be found to be desirable. Another point was that, sooner or later, the principle of compensation must come to an end. He was not particular about the time; all he insisted upon was that an end should be put to it at some time or other. He submitted that these conditions were reasonable.

The Royal Commission, to which reference had frequently been made in the course of the debate, reported that we had a gigantic evil in our midst, and that it was a national degradation that had to be dealt with. They would not reduce that national degradation unless there was a large reduction in the number of public houses, and unless there was to be that large reduction, State interference in the matter was altogether unnecessary. This Bill would not facilitate a reduction in the number of public houses. It was, if he might be allowed to use the expression, an imposture; it would not facilitate a reduction in the number of licensed houses, but it would check justices and limit their power to get rid of these places. The real object of the Bill was to put a stop to the energy which the magistrates had been recently showing in reducing licences. In definite words, in Clause VI., the Bill deprived the justices of the power to refuse the renewal of licences on other ground than misconduct, unless compensation was paid. The levy mentioned in the Bill was a meagre one, and he doubted if hon. Members had any idea how meagre that levy was. Take the case of a small country town with ten licensed houses. It would take thirty years before there would be sufficient money to buy out one licence. Then, in the case of a larger area with 150 licences, assuming that the licences taken away would be only half the average annual value, it would only be possible to get rid of one a year. If they examined the provisions of the Bill, they would find that it did not compel the payment of the full levy of 6s. 8d. per £100. It was quite possible, if the local authorities thought it desirable, to make the levy as low as 3d. per £100. Another point which ought to be borne in mind was that the system of exchanges of licences was practically put an end to, and reduction by purchase was to take the place of reduction by exchange. In fact, the reductions now occurring, except for reasons of misconduct, would be put a stop to altogether; and, further than that, the misconduct would have to be very grave, indeed, before a licence was abolished when once the principle of compensation was accepted. As a matter of fact, the fund, if established according to the Bill, would not be sufficient to buy out as many licences as were got rid of under present circumstances without compensation. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley, in a letter published in the Press to-day, had declared that if Mr. Goschen's scheme had been accepted it would have settled the temperance question.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): No, I said it would have settled the point which the hon. Gentleman is now raising.

*MR. WHITTAKER said he would like to point out that the amount of money provided by Lord Goschen's scheme was so meagre that, as a matter of actual fact, since that scheme had been rejected they had got rid of more licences up and down the country than it would have been possible to abolish under it.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: If the scheme had been adopted there would have been £6,000,000 in the fund at the present moment.

*MR. WHITTAKER said he would like to give some illustrations to prove his argument. The Royal Commission had before it figures showing the number of licences in London in 1886 and 1896, and during that period of ten years 866 of the old licences disappeared. Taking the estimate given in the Majority Report of the amount of money that would be raised by a levy on the value of the houses — an estimate made by Mr. E. North Buxton, than whom there was no higher authority in the trade—it might be taken that the average value of beer and public-houses of the kind that were likely to be closed would be £2,500 each. It was estimated that a fund on the basis provided by the Bill would, in a period of ten years, have sufficed to buy up only 540 houses, whereas, without the power of compensation, no fewer than 866 of these licensed premises had been closed. He might be reminded that the County Council had got rid of a number of the licences; as a matter of fact, during the ten years the County Council had closed forty licensed houses.

*MR. GROVES (Salford, S.): Yes, and they have had to pay for them.

*MR. WHITTAKER said that interruption was not germane to his argument. What he desired to impress upon the House was that under the scheme set forth in the Bill they would get rid of fewer licences than they were getting rid of without it. It would only have been possible to close 580 houses, apart from cases of misconduct, as against the 866 which had actually been closed without any scheme of compensation. This was not a question for London only. He had a list of thirty-five licensing districts—thirty-two of them being boroughs—which he ventured to suggest were of a representative character. He would read the names:—Carlisle, Exeter, Plymouth, South Shields, Sunderland, Blackburn, Preston, Salford, Norwich, Newcastle, Tynemouth, Pembroke, Haverfordwest, Shrewsbury, Wenlock, Reigate, Bradford, Bedford, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Margate, Oldham, Rochdale, Ashton-under-Lyne, Yarmouth, Nottingham, Bath, Kingston, Kidderminster, Worcester, Hull, and Middlesbrough. Between 1886 and 1896 in those thirty-five licensing districts twice as many licences were got rid of as would have been possible under the scheme of this Bill. If the Bill had been in force during that decade, the reduction in the number of licences in those districts would have been less than one-half of that which it had been.

*MR. GROVES: Do these figures include licences given up for public improvements and for misconduct?

*MR. WHITTAKER: Yes, they include all reductions. Another illustration of the inadequacy of the levy was the fact that Scotland had far fewer publichouses and licensed premises, in proportion to the population, than England, and, under this scheme, it would be more than sixty years before the number of licensed premises in England could be reduced to the number that existed in Scotland according to population, as the population here now stood — and Scotland wanted a further reduction. The Bill was a retrograde proposal, and instead of being a reduction-facilitating Bill, it was a reduction-prevention Bill. It was a ridiculous farce, an imposture, and it was really trifling with the House and the country to bring forward such a measure and describe it as one for facilitating the reduction of the number of publichouses. Never before had a proposal to give compensation to the trade been made in Parliament without being accompanied by some substantial temperance reform. The proposal under Mr. Bruce's Bill was accompanied by a sweeping measure of temperance reform, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he introduced his Bill of 1888, thought he was giving a wide scheme of temperance reform. On that occasion, however, the right hon. Gentleman had been wrongly advised as to the law, as the justices already had the power he proposed to give. The misapprehension under which the right hon. Gentleman laboured was shown by his statement on 9th March, 1888, when he said—

> "Although these licences are technically renewable year by year, it has again and again been held by the Courts of law that renewals of these licences cannot be refused except for fault shown. We think it is an undoubted defect in the existing condition of the law that the licensing authority has no power to reduce the number of licences, however much they may consider the licences are out of proportion to the needs of the population."

The right hon. Gentleman therefore thought he was giving a substantial measure of temperance reform when he proposed to give the County Councils power to reduce the number of licences. Sir E. Clarke was responsible for that mistake, and it was while he was misleading the Government the Sharp v. Wakefield decision was given. Then in 1890 it was distinctly stated that the power to buy was to be additional to the justices' power to refuse. When it was suggested that the proposal would limit the power of the justices, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer repudiated the idea and said—

> "Nothing can be more contrary to our intention; nothing can be more ludicrous."

The Majority Report recommended the compensation on which the hon. Member had founded his Bill, but it also recommended substantial temperance reform. The levy was miserably inadequate. Even the insurance money was often 15s. per cent. so that, as the levy was only 6s. 8d., they would save on the insurance.

It was suggested that the trade could not afford to provide the necessary money. The fact had too long been lost sight of that eighty years ago the trade was taxed two and a half times as heavily as at present. When the miserable Beer Act of 1830 was passed, there was a duty of 10s. per barrel on beer, and a malt tax equivalent to 7s. or 8s., or 9s. per barrel, so that from 1800 to 1830 the taxation on beer, through the malt and beer taxes, amounted to from 14s. to 20s. per barrel. The 10s. duty was taken off when the Beer Act of 1830 was passed and had never been re-imposed. That relief from taxation had gone into the value of the houses and created the difficulty which now existed. Five per cent. on the present taxation, or as much as had been levied on the trade for the war, would provide all that was required. Would that be crushing? The trade were in this dilemma. If, as was sometimes contended, a reduction in the number of public-houses did not diminish drinking, then the trade could bear it, because if there was the same amount of trade with fewer houses the profits would be larger, as working expenses would be smaller, and there would really be no levy on the trade at all. On the other hand, if a reduction did diminish the drinking, it meant the public-houses promoted drinking and intemperance, and were therefore a public evil. At the outside, the levy would produce £500,000 a year, or 30s. per hundred of population, so that in a village of 1,000 inhabitants £15 a year would be realised for buying up licences. Taking the value of a licence at £1,000, the levy for sixty-six villages with a population of 1,000 each would be required to buy up one licence. Fancy the authority in the West Riding of Yorkshire running about among sixty-six villages with the money to buy up one licence to decide in which village that licence should be got rid of. And, moreover, it would be another sixty-six years before the turn of that village to get rid of a second licence came round! The whole proposal was ludicrous, and the machinery for carrying it out was ridiculous. The joint committees were to levy the money, the reducing authorities were to reduce, and then there was to be an appeal to Quarter Sessions. The joint committees need not levy the 6s. 8d.; they might levy 3d., and so put a stop to the whole business. But suppose they did levy the money, the reducing authority might not use it; they were not bound to abolish licences. If they did, there was still an appeal to Quarter Sessions. In many cases the Bill would make a reduction absolutely impossible, and to talk about it as a measure for facilitating reduction was really to misrepresent the whole thing. At no time was the scheme to cease; the value of the houses would go on accumulating as the number diminished, and even new licences were to acquire a claim. It was really a perpetual endowment scheme for public-houses. To sum up: the Bill would seriously diminish the power of the justices, it would limit their power to reduce the number of licences to an amount provided by another body; at best, that amount would be ridiculously small, and it would make the reduction over the greater part of the country smaller than it had been without any such Bill; it would entrench in a stronger legal position than it was now in a trade, the results of which the majority of the Royal Commission described as "a gigantic soil and a national degradation," and, what was worse, it would practically slam the door in the face of all hope of temperance reform in the future. It was, therefore, with great confidence that he moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Whitaker.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston) said he did not intend to go into the details dealt with by the hon. Member who had moved the rejection of this Bill. It seemed to him, however, that it was very desirable that the House should be fully alive as to the issue upon which their votes would be given. An attempt had been made to prove that their votes would be given upon the principle of compensation, but he ventured to say that the principle of compensation was far too vague a matter to dictate any hon. Member's vote, because the term "compensation" had been applied to such a great variety of proposals differing widely from one another. Lord Peel's proposals had constantly been declared to be no compensation at all. The principle was so varied in its meaning that any hon. Member who voted in favour of this measure on the ground of the compensation principle would make a very serious mistake. If a Bill had been introduced embodying

Lord Peel's conception of compensation he did not think the mover and seconder of this Bill would have supported such a proposal on the ground that it merely embodied the principle of compensation. They would have voted against it because they would have regarded the compensation as wholly inadequate. What they had to do was to look this Bill in the face as a big practical fact. Each hon. Member must ask himself whether this Bill, as a whole, would do good or harm, and whether it would help or hinder temperance reform. This Bill would reduce the number of withdrawals of licences, and refusals of renewals would be much fewer than they were at present because if every local authority in every area were to extend the largest sum to be got from the licence holders and exercise its powers to the fullest extent, and if in every case they were supported by Quarter Sessions, it would take 100 years to diminish the licences by one-third. He thought under such conditions practically no reduction of licences would take place under the proposals of this measure. One of the most serious aspects was that this measure would do away with the power of the magistrates to do anything to raise the character of public houses. A great deal of success had attended the efforts of the Liverpool magistrates in this respect, for their policy was to diligently watch the character of the different public houses and let it be known to the publican that if his house fell below the standard, or if it gained the reputation of being the worst conducted house in the neighbourhood, that licence would be withdrawn. He believed the influence of this course had done more to diminish drunkenness in Liverpool than the reduction of the number of licences, and all this warning to the publican that if his business was badly conducted he would not have his licence renewed would be gone if this measure were carried.

It had been very clearly pointed out that by insurance publicans had been hitherto able to meet the case. The great insurance company doing this business showed that it had made a substantial profit on the year's working, notwithstanding all the licences which had been taken away. Personally, he thought it was perfectly possible for the trade to make an insurance arrangement of its own. Allusion was made by the introducer of the Bill to the fact that sometimes individuals lost their livelihood through the action of the justices. A very striking thing throughout the whole of this controversy was how difficult it had been to establish cases of individual hardship. If there had been many of these cases, Sir Ralph Littler would not have been so unfortunate in his illustrations. In one of the two illustrations chosen by him it was alleged that a man had been paid £300 to enter upon his licence; it was proved that that man had paid his £300 for furniture and fittings and that he had paid nothing for goodwill. Sir Ralph Littler replied that as the furniture and fittings would have to be sold there would be a certain amount of loss. The other case was that of a widow who was said to have paid over £700 to meet the requirements of the authorities. When this case came to be sifted it was found that this amount had been paid, in part for the acquisition of adjoining property, and that it had not been paid by the widow at all but by a wealthy firm of brewers. Sir Ralph Littler replied that it did not matter who paid the money, and it would be no consolation, he said, to Lord Peel if a robbery had taken place in his house to say that it had been perpetrated by one of his own servants. It was as clearly shown that this loss which was alleged to have taken place, instead of falling upon the widow, had fallen upon those who were carrying on a lucrative business. If this were a question of legal right, the fact that the brewers were prosperous would be no reason why their right should be denied them. It seemed to him that the House had a very serious decision to come to, for this question would be watched throughout the country with a very great amount of interest. Young men and women were making towards the great cities and towns, where they encountered not only the warfare of commercial competition but the greater battle between the powers that worked for good and evil. They had hands stretched out on one hand to drag them down; they had temptations put in their way; there were also hands stretched out to help them. Any one who had any acquaintance with the philanthropic efforts of great cities could realise how many men and women there were who were devoting their whole lives to trying to raise the fallen, and protect the poor. To all those carrying on this noble work in an unostentatious spirit the passing of this measure would be a stunning blow. I urge this House, with all earnestness, to refrain from doing this great wrong.

Mr. LLOYD WHARTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon) said that even the hon. Member opposite, who was in favour of doing away with the liquor trade, could not help feeling that it was only right and fair that something should be done in the way of compensation to remedy any injustice caused by the removal of licences. He did not think he needed to apologise to the House for rising on this occasion, because, whereas his hon. friend opposite represented the Minority Report of the Commission, he believed that on the Ministerial side of the House he was alone in representing the majority of that Commission; and as this Bill represented the recommendations of the Majority Report with regard to compensation he felt it his duty to trouble the House a few minutes upon this subject. The Majority Report, as the House probably knew, was the Report of seventeen out of twenty-four Members, and their recommendation for compensation was virtually the recommendation of the scheme of this Bill. The whole Commission, both majority and minority, were in favour of some scheme of compensation. So that, as far as the principal matter connected with this Bill was concerned, the rough idea of the measure was supported by the whole of the Royal Commission. That was no slight matter for them to consider upon the Second Reading of this Bill. They were told that there was no property in licences, but still the recognition of licences by the tax-gatherers was such that it was impossible to disregard this sort of property. As far as he could gather from the feeling of the country there was, amongst the majority, a determination that there should be some measure of compensation when dealing with public houses that had been well conducted for many years. His hon. friend who had just sat down told them that the cases quoted by Sir Ralph Littler did not show any material hardship. The other day he happened to occupy the position of Chairman of Quarter Sessions, and he had a good many of these cases to deal with. On one day he had seven cases before him. He would only trouble the House with short details of three out of the seven cases, and if they did not convey to hon. Members proof of some hardship he should be very much mistaken. He would take the case of a small hotel situated on the bank of the river Wear; there was not a bad record of any kind against the house; it was kept by an old lady, assisted by her daughter, and was used mainly by men upon the ships in the river. The whole takings of the hotel were £6 a week, and according to the usual computation £2 of that sum would be regarded as profit. She was put in there without any rent to pay, having been a good old servant. It was proposed by the local bench of magistrates to take away the licence as being unnecessary. He should have thought that if ever there was a house which was necessary this one was necessary for the particular class of the public who went there to enjoy social intercourse. An appeal in that case was allowed, and he held that it would have been a gross injustice and hardship to the licence holder if the Appeal Court had supported the magistrates in that case in taking away the licence.

Mr. CORBETT: Will the hon. Member say if compensation would be given in that case, where the tenant is a tenant at will?

Mr. WHARTON said that would depend on circumstances. In another case the local authority insisted, most rightly, in the carrying out of certain sanitary repairs. The cost was £274. The total profit in a year from that place was £200. The local bench took the licence away, although the licence holder had acted up to their orders. In that case, there being no cause for complaint, such refusal was a gross hardship and injustice. The appeal was allowed.

The third case was one where the house was bought by the woman who kept it for £1,700, of which £300 was her own, the rest being borrowed. A fire occurred in the house the year she took possession, and the interior was burned. She was able to maintain the house, and to continue the business while the rebuilding of the injured part went on, the repairs being paid for out of the profits. When the repairs were completed, the magistrates refused to renew the licence, although there was no complaint against the house. These were cases of hardship and injustice, where the Appeal Court came in for the restitution of justice. With regard to the question whether or not the frequency of public-houses produced drunkenness, the fact came out in the evidence given before the Committee that drunkenness did not follow the public houses; it followed money, and where there were high wages there was the drink. It was not a question of public houses, although he agreed with his hon. friend in wishing to see a reduction in the number. He looked at the question from the police point of view. If there were five public houses in a district, and two were taken away, the police could deal more easily with the three that remained. His hon. friend opposite said that the compensation proposed was of insufficient amount, and he was opposed to the Bill because of that limitation. But this was a matter that might be cured in Committee, and was no reason for opposing the Bill. He should vote for the second reading, because he believed the Bill would carry out what he desired in the way of limiting the number of public houses, and would act in the direction of promoting temperance in the country.

*Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said that in order to justify the few remarks he had to make in respect of the Bill under consideration, he asked the House to pardon him if he referred briefly to a number of circumstances bearing on this question with which he was himself most familiar. He had been a chairman of Petty Sessions for thirty years, and also deputy chairman of Quarter Sessions, and he had had considerable experience in licensing matters, and things of that description. A Return had been made of the number of public houses according to population in the whole of the separate Petty Sessional Divisions of the West Riding of Yorkshire. In looking over that Return he found that the division in which he had been acting so long was, by far, at the head of the list. There was in it only one licensed house to about every 600 of the population. Although meetings of the justices had been held to consider the question of the reduction of the licences it had not been found necessary to reduce any, as for thirty years no new licence had been granted seeing the population had increased twofold during these thirty years, and as no new licence had been granted, that meant practically that there had been a reduction of licences. That suited two opposed sections of people very well indeed. The publicans were satisfied, because their houses had become more valuable, and the temperance people were satisfied because no more licences had been issued. The Bill, he considered, was misnamed in being entitled a Bill for compensation. The strong point of the Bill was not compensation, but simply to give an assured statutory position to the licence-holders. If the Bill had been introduced simply with a compensation clause it might have secured his support, although some question might have arisen as to how the money should be obtained for the purposes of compensation, but beyond that he could not go at all. By the Bill the licence-holder was placed in a different position from that which he at present occupied, because now a licence could not be taken away without compensation if the holder was able to obtain a testimonial of good character, etc. Now, hon. Members knew that it was very easy to get such a testimonial. He did not believe that the Bill would carry out the reform which the public desired, viz., the reduction of licences, or the amount of drinking. He would remind the House that many years ago if two endorsements were made on the licence against the same house, that involved the forfeiture of the licence; but a modification of the Act took place by which the forfeiture of the licence was to take place with reference to the tenant only, and not to the house. Since then the power of the magistrates in regard to the reduction of licensed houses had been practically taken away from them, because, in case of the endowment of a licence, the old tenant was displaced, a new tenant was put in, and the house began again on a fresh basis. Again, appeals had not been satisfactory in any way, and it was difficult, if opposed by an appeal, to obtain convictions against a house; so that for twenty years past, in his own district, no suppression of a licence had taken place. The passing of the Bill would be simply to paralyse the action of the magistrates, and give no protection or safeguard to the public, and would extend, and not diminish, the opportunities for drinking to the injury of the people.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tonbridge) said that the Bill raised a question of the very greatest and most pressing importance, because, he ventured to say, unless some equitable solution was found for the compensation of those whose property in a licence was taken away in consequence of the demand for the reduction of licences, and not as the result of any misconduct, there could be very little progress in that particular form of temperance reform which was supposed to follow from the reduction of licensed houses. If the magistrates were not given to understand clearly that their action must depend on some equitable method of compensation, public opinion would become so strong that the present movement in favour of the reduction of licences would be stopped. In dealing with the Bill, he and other hon. Members were in some difficulty. He entirely supported the principle on which the Bill was founded—the principle that reduction of licences for other reasons than misconduct must be accompanied by compensation. But he could not agree with the details of the Bill, because he did not see why the whole of the compensation should come out of the trade. In fact, when there was a question of a change of policy resulting from a desire to do a public good it seemed to him that the cost of that change should come, not out of the trade affected, but out of the public generally. He wished to make it perfectly clear at the outset that he did not pledge himself to the support of the details of the Bill. He confessed to being very much astonished at the opposition of some of the hon. Members to the Bill. He was astonished at the attitude taken up by his hon. friend the Member for Spen Valley. Nobody would suggest that the hon. Member was not actuated by the highest and best motives; he had worked as a temperance reformer with the greatest energy for many years, and everything that he said deserved a candid hearing on the part of the House But why should the hon. Gentleman who signed the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, which distinctly laid down the principle of compensation, oppose this Bill? The hon. Gentleman had said over and over again, first of all that there ought to be compensation; second, that it should come from the trade; and third, that a certain part of the trade would escape unless there was legislation. Why then should he object to the plan of his hon. friend the Member for York, which would make the whole trade contribute. In fact the greater part of the hon. Gentleman's speech had been devoted to proving what was laid down in black and white in the Bill, and yet he moved the rejection of a measure which supported the very views he expressed when he signed the Minority Report of the Royal Commission. The reason which the hon. Gentleman gave was that the Bill would curtail the power of the magistrates, and that the fund raised would be so small that there would be less reduction under the Bill than there had been in recent years without it. But the hon. Member entirely overlooked the fact that the reduction which had taken place in recent years had been almost entirely due to either misconduct on the part of the licence-holder or to public improvements.

MR. WHITTAKER: No.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Yes, it was the case that until a few years ago there was hardly an instance of a licence being taken away, except for public improvements or misconduct; and the hon. Member forgot that under this Bill both these causes of reduction would continue to operate. Whenever a public improvement was made, either by the local authority or by private individuals, and a reduction of the licences took place—in every one of these cases the full market value of the licence would be paid. And so also the reduction of licences for misconduct would continue under the Bill if it became an Act, as in the past. But a new method of reduction would be added by the Bill by enabling the magistrates to do it equitably by finding compensation for the suppression of the licences. He, therefore, failed entirely to understand the position taken up by his hon. friend. Passing from that, he wished to consider first, the question of the reduction of licences; second, whether there ought to be compensation; and, third, the form which that compensation ought to take. It seemed to be assumed by hon. Members opposite, and by a good many hon. Members on his own side of the House, that reduction of licences was a sort of panacea for drunkenness. He very much doubted that. As long as they permitted clubs to be built, and new clubs to grow up which were not subject to strict police control, and which were open at all hours, he did not see how a reduction in the number of public houses was going to lead to a large diminution of drinking, for the holder of the suppressed licence would immediately start a club, and all the worst evils of a club would take the place of the evils of the public house. The figures which had been quoted over and over again did not prove the contention of the hon. Member that drunkenness varied in the same ratio as the number of public houses. Sir Ralph Littler had shown by figures that in Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Hertfordshire, Staffordshire, and other districts, where there was only one publichouse to 104 of the popution, the convictions for drunkenness were fewer than in Cheshire, Durham, Lancashire, Glamorganshire, and other districts where there was one public house to 374 of the population. This showed that where there were more public houses there were fewer convictions for drunkenness. He would quote one great authority in this matter. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "Mere reduction of licences as a remedy for intemperance is little short of imposture."

He maintained that the wholesale reduction of licences recently made by the justices, from the best of motives no doubt, was a mistake. The whole question ought to be tackled, because the mere reduction alone would not settle it. He might say parenthetically that he was generally in favour of a reduction in the number of public houses.

Now, as to the question of compensation, a good deal had been said that day about legal rights. He did not doubt that the justices had an absolute legal right to take away licences if they believed that these licences were not wanted. He thought that there was no difference of opinion in the House in regard to that. But the question was not one of legal right; it was a question of moral and equitable right—whether the law was fair, equitable, and just. It was because he, and those who agreed with him, contended that the law as ascertained now was not just, fair, and equitable, that they said it there was to be a wholesale reduction of licences the principle of compensation must be settled once for all, and that until it was so settled the movement for the reduction should be checked. The hon. Gentleman opposite said that it was not poor people that would suffer. He did not care who suffered, whether it was the poor widow or the rich brewer who had his property taken away by a change of public policy. There ought to be no injustice on anyone. In Farnham sixteen licences were taken away. He would quote one or two cases. One was the case of a licence held since 1838 with stabling for twelve horses; profit £123; no complaint ever made. Why should that licence be taken away? Why should the brewer, if it were a brewer, have his property taken away after having held the licence for such a number of years, and why should the publican who earned his livelihood by managing the house lose that livelihood? Another licence was held by a widow for twenty-two years; the house was registered as a lodging-house, and the justices had allowed £791 to be spent on it. There was no complaint, and again he asked why should such a licence be taken away without full and adequate compensation being paid both to the owner and the occupier? He would take another case. A friend of his who was managing director of a brewery company, in which he had invested most of his money, wrote that two months ago the local justices selected an area in Birkenhead, and requested the voluntary surrender of 25 per cent. of the licences. The brewery company had two houses in that area, and gave up the least important of the two, which they had purchased for £2,640, and which without the licence was not worth £500. Why should that company, which had invested its money on the reasonable expectation that the licence would be renewed, except for misconduct, lose its money as a result of a change of public policy? He contended that whatever their legal right might be, the moral right of the magistrates to take away licences without compensation did not exist. Two strong reasons were given to prove that. In estimating property for the purpose of the Death Duties the State took the full market value on the hypothesis that the licence would be renewed. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley made great fun of that. The hon. Member said that a man might die leaving a racehorse which would be valued at its full market value, and that perhaps the following week it would meet with an accident, and have to be killed. The hon. Member said that brewers took the same risk. But the racehorse would not be killed in consequence of a change of public policy. The State did not decree how many racehorses there were to be in the country. The point in regard to the reduction of licences was that it was the result of a change of policy which had been suddenly introduced, no doubt for excellent reasons; and according to every British tradition of honesty and justice the persons aggrieved by that change of policy should be fully and properly compensated.

Take again the question of structural alterations, which appeared to him to be the strongest point of all. When a man applied for a licence, or for the renewal of a licence, the justices very often insisted on certain structural alterations being made. Did the hon. Gentleman opposite suppose that structural alterations, which might involve the expenditure of thousands of pounds, were to be made for one year only? The very fact that those structural alterations were made a condition of the licence being granted showed that in the eyes of the justices the licence was to be for more than one year. He had no doubt that until the justice of compensation was admitted, there would be no temperance reform. The only point was—what form should the compensation take? His hon. friend who introduced the Bill was in the difficulty that as an unofficial Member he could not propose a charge on the public revenue. But to charge the whole of the compensation on the trade would be unfair and illogical, and for this reason. If less beer and spirits were consumed as the result of the reduction of licences, the houses which remained would not profit by the reduction. If the Bill were to do anything from the temperance point of view, then the public would profit, and for that the public ought to pay. If the remaining houses were going to sell as much liquor as before, then reduction of licences would be useless, and would even be an evil because the people would be massed into fewer houses, and drunkenness would be made more easy. There was another strong reason why the public should contribute a certain share. In the year 1890, as the House knew, the State allocated £440,000 a year—amounting now to over £6,000,000—for the express purpose of buying out public houses; but the money had been diverted to other, though, no doubt, excellent purposes. He thought the trade had an absolute claim to the whole of that money, at least, being devoted to the payment of compensation for the reduction of licences. He ventured to say that that contribution at least should be made from the public exchequer; and if that were done, justice would be done, and a step in the direction of temperance reform would be taken. He supported the principle of the measure, and he hoped the Second Reading would be passed. He hoped also that when they came to consider the details, they would be able to arrive at a solution more equitable than that proposed by his hon. friend.

*SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne) said it appeared strange to him as a new Member to find, on returning to the House, that it was still engaged in endeavouring to cure the drink evil. In a few words he would endeavour to deal with the principle of the Bill as was the custom on a Second Reading debate, and would leave the details to Committee. The hon. Member had brought forward the Bill on the broad ground of compensation, and therefore they would vote in favour of compensation or against it. What was the correct position for the State to take up with regard to the liquor traffic? Lord Wolseley said some years ago that the only pressing enemy to England was strong drink. When he left the House there was proceeding a war which had been settled in a sort of way, and he now came back to find peace. The question was whether this Bill would diminish the evil caused by strong drink. In his opinion it would not. What ought legislation to do with regard to promoting temperance except to remove temptation? Every step must be taken in that direction to do any good. During the last year or two the House had passed a Bill preventing children being served with drink, and last year there was the Bill brought forward by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and supported by the whole House, to do something to diminish the temptation to drink. One very prominent part of that Bill dealt with clubs, which were a very great nuisance, but he would ask whether licensed public houses were much better than clubs. *The Times* had said that it would be impossible to find anything which caused so much loss to soul, body and estate as the public house. It was a huge nuisance and misery, and there was no vice, disease, disorder, or calamity of any kind which had not its frequent rise in the public house. For a long time the magistrates had not done much in the way of protecting the people from the public house. In fact they had not shown the efficiency recommended by Lord Rosebery. Had they preserved the people from legalised temptations there would probably have been no Permissive Bill or Local Veto Bill in this House, and they would have had this complex question of politics eliminated from their discussions. The Farnham case showed the magistrates that they could take the initiative and they found that they had the best public opinion at their back, and that all Christian and patriotic people were with them. But what happened? All of a sudden the Prime Minister came down to a meeting, and, in the words of the hon. Gentleman opposite, he gave a severe lecture to the magistrates. They had heard of John Knox tuning the pulpits, but that was nothing to the Prime Minister bullying the benches. He was glad to see that the bullying did not have much effect in the country. In his own county it had no effect whatever, because the magistrates at Quarter Sessions refuse as many licences as they thought fit. He even doubted whether the country approved of the Prime Minister's lecture. At all events he went down to Camborne recently and spent a great part of his time in a business which was new to him—that of defending the integrity and independence of the magistrates—and the result was that the electors sent him to the House to tell the Prime Minister what they thought of his severe lecture. He was rather surprised to hear the language used towards the Bill by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley, who called it fraudulent.

MR. WHITTAKER: No, I said it was an imposture.

*SIR WILFRID LAWSON said that when he was in the House he should not have been allowed to use language like that. He simply said it was a howling fraud, because it said in the memorandum that it was intended to facilitate the reduction of licences. How was it possible to first take away the powers of the magistrates to reduce licences and then say it would facilitate their reduction? He did not believe that public opinion was with the hon. Gentleman. The Church of England Temperance Society, which was a very influential association, with the King at its head and all the Bishops of the country as its Vice-Presidents, had declared that the Bill of the hon. Member instead of facilitating reduction of licences would seriously hamper the existing powers of the licensing justices. In his opinion compensation was as objectionable as anything could well be. Both the Majority and Minority Reports agreed that public money ought not to be given for that purpose. If it was public money that was to be taken, it would be condemned by everybody, and if it was to be private money, it ought not to be set out in a public Bill, and the House ought to have nothing whatever to do with any arrangement made between the liquor sellers themselves, as they would have nothing to do with an arrangement between an equal number of tailors or shoemakers. But it really was public money that would be taken to pay persons who could not get a licence. They only possessed pieces of paper, upon which it was proposed to initiate a scheme that would cost the country millions and millions of money. He respectfully asked the House to be chary in taking such a step. Let them remember what took place eight or ten years ago when virtually this scheme was brought before the House. It was then opposed bitterly throughout the country, not by wretched fanatics like himself, but by the respectable people —the moderate drinkers of the country. They were against the Government of the day, a stronger Government, perhaps, than this, and quite as good — if that were possible. There were tremendous demonstrations all over the country, and the common-sense portion of the English people said they would not pay these people because they would not be allowed to sell beer. He was not going to brag, boast, or prophesy, but it looked as if the fight was going on again. He did not say they would be able to defeat the liquor men if they went into it heart and soul, but he did say they would make it one of the biggest fights ever seen in this country. Twelve years had elapsed since the last fight, and in that twelve years they had been teaching the people what the public houses really were, and what misery and horror were produced by the drink traffic. The Leader of the Opposition and his hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth were in the last fight, and they would be in it again if he knew them at all, as in fact would be every one except those who had a financial or political interest in the question. He saw an expression on the previous day which defined the situation very well. It was that the liquor trade had presented a pistol at the head of the Government with a demand "Your life or the nation's money!" Of course he was not going to blame the Government. It was a case of skin for skin, and before a man would give his life he would be prepared to give other people's money. Even the Government, strong and determined as they were, desired to save their own lives, but he would ask them to pause and consider what would be the effect on their character—for they had a character. The Colonial Secretary once said that a priest-ridden nation was to be pitied and a publican-ridden nation to be despised. He shuddered to think of the language that would have to be used by the right hon. Gentleman of a Government that was both. He implored the House to throw out the Bill and show the world that the time had come for the House to take into its own hands the power to quell and check an evil that was against the best interests of the nation.

*MR. GROVES said he had had the pleasure for the first time of listening to the hon. Baronet, though he had known of him for many years. The hon. Baronet went to Manchester for the purpose of his annual pic-nic as president of the United Kingdom Alliance. and he was a familiar figure who had proved a great stumbling block to much practical temperance legislation for the last quarter of a century. These remarks he offered in no personal sense, as until now he had not had the pleasure or honour of the hon. Gentleman's acquaintance. In his remarkably lucid and clear introduction of this Bill the hon. Member for York dealt with its various provisions. and he did not therefore purpose going into the details of the Bill. He was there to express his adherence to the broad principles embodied in the Bill, and he did this with a full sense of the responsibility attaching to him, not only as a Member of that House but in his capacity as Chairman of the Country Brewers' Society of England and Wales. He voiced the opinion of the wholesale trade of the country, and he desired to take that opportunity of saying that while they considered the time had come when the principle of compensation for the reduction of licences, if licences were to be reduced, should be accepted by the House, they did not lay down any hard and fast or cast-iron rules or methods as to how the fund from which compensation was to be derived, should be raised, but they were willing to pledge themselves to support the broad principle of compensation which was embodied in the Bill. He looked upon the hon. Member for the Spen Valley, as no doubt he (Mr. Whittaker) looked upon him, as being among the rather dangerous men of the other side. He should like to say that he saw a great danger in the characteristics and attributes of the hon. Member, because he combined the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in reso* necessary for carrying the propaganda of which he was the apostle to a successful issue. One of his most dangerous attributes was that, unlike the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, he was quite willing to accept an instalment of his programme, but he carried up his sleeve the remaining part of his propaganda; and as soon as he had got what they were willing to give him, like Oliver Twist he wanted more.

The position the licensed trade took up was that when legislation took effect there should be continuity and fixity in the policy, aim and intent of that legislation; and it was because they desired, equally with their friends on the other side of the House, continuity and fixity of policy that they supported this Bill, with many of the provisions of which they did not agree and some of which they objected to. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley flourished a document emphasising the argument that licences were at the present moment insurable at a very low rate of premium. Cases like this were not established by flourishing documents in small print from the other side of the House, but if he could have established a case, even upon the basis of that document, he would have strengthened the cause he was advocating. As a matter of fact, however, he had had an opportunity of perusing that document and he would venture to give an extract which his hon. friend, no doubt unintentionally, omitted. It was the prospectus of a prominent License Insurance Company. It was, to a large extent, governed on its Board of Directors by brewers, and so far perhaps was open to suspicion, but the extract which the hon. Member omitted to read contained a distinct enunciation by the Chairman of the Board to the effect that in a very large number of cases licences at the present moment were uninsurable by the Company.

*MR. WHITTAKER said he was reading from the prospectus and there was no such limitation in it.

*MR. GROVES said he had understood from the hon. Member that document was dated last week. The speech, was at the last annual meeting of the Company about a month ago. The date of the prospectus was probably a year or two ago. Events moved rapidly, and they must take the policy of the Company as enunciated in the latest pronouncement of the Chairman at the last annual meeting. The Chairman of the Company said that under the altered circumstances these licences could not be insured by the Company on the old terms. He was speaking with regard to those scheduled areas which existed in many large centres and which were referred to by the magistrates in their statements from the Benches a month or two ago—certain areas that were considered to be congested and in which a large reduction of licences would be required in the current year. When they had the statement that this Company, which had done the majority of the license insurance, no longer intended to accept premiums on the old conditions and excluded this risk from their policies he thought the hon. Member had entirely failed to make out his case that for a small premium licence holders were able to insure their property. A stronger case even was presented by the Company which did the second largest business in this direct on, and which absolutely refused to insure any licenses against this special risk. The hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced the Bill ventured to predict that if the hon. Member for the Spen Valley found a satisfactory solution of this difficult problem he would deserve to go down to posterity as one of the greatest benefactors of the human race. He did not know whether the hon. Member intended to go down to posterity as a benefactor of the human race, but he could well imagine that on the lonely hill-sides of the Spen Valley monuments might be erected to the heroic efforts of the hon. Member to bring about the real object of his propaganda—the total suppression of the liquor trade. He did not think he would succeed, although, because of the attributes he had mentioned, he would make greater progress than the hon. Member for the Camborne Division. If the hon. Member desired to obtain any practical result of his labours he would have to adopt a different attitude to that he had adopted that day. He listened to his long and interesting speech, but he had great difficulty in knowing whether he was arguing in favour of compensation or against it. As an hon. Member had suggested to him, he talked all round his hat, and it was a particularly bad hat at that. He went all round the subject, and when he sat down they had the greatest difficulty in ascertaining whether he was really guided by the instincts which had prompted him during the last twenty years or whether his latter day common sense was urging him in the direction of taking the practical reform offered to him by the present Bill.

What had brought this position about? It was not that the magistrates had been gradually waking up to a sense of their duty, or that they had become suddenly alive to the fact that they possessed powers which they had not known before. It was largely due to the fact that a circular had been issued broadcast to every magistrate in the country by the chairman of the Birmingham licensing Magistrates. He trusted he should not give offence to any relative of that gentleman who might be in the House, but in his opinion the chairman of the Birmingham Bench of Magistrates was at the present moment suffering from a severe attack of swelled head, and if he desired to set himself up as an emperor in the reform of the licensing laws he would ask him to address himself to a practical solution of this question by methods which did not carry with them an attempt to compass what might be a great right by inflicting a great wrong. Their opinion was that the licensing justices had taken a different attitude, partly because of this circular and partly owing to the fact that they were becoming increasingly dominated by the fanatical element of the teetotal party.

The trade would not shirk the conflict. He was not there to champion the trade. which was strong enough to look after itself. But he felt that thinking people in England were waking up to the fact that the action of the magistrates in singling out a certain section of the community for different treatment from that accorded to any other section was unfair and wrong, and that it was time an end was put to the crusade of spoliation and robbery which these people had initiated. Could it be said that a bench of magistrates, composed of men of the views of the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, could possibly adjudicate judicially on applications for new licences or for renewals of old licences? If an illustration were needed of the real feeling of the country upon this important question, it might be fittingly expressed by the opinion of the Members of this House, and the Reports of the Royal Commission. Seven members of the Royal Commission supported the Minority Report, which was against compensation, but, on the other hand, seventeen members supported the Majority Report upon which this Bill was based. He was content that those figures should be taken as representing the true opinion of the country; he assumed there would be a similar proportion in favour of this Bill when the House went to a division, and he thought the same preponderance of opinion would be found outside. He ventured to say that he and those who worked with him had done more for true temperance than many of those on the opposite side. The holders of licences were the people to find a satisfactory solution of the problem; if they were met with fair terms, and given the rights they were entitled to demand, they would meet hon. Gentlemen opposite. If this was not settled to-day—he did not suppose for a moment that the division would go against them, but if it did, there was an appeal outside the House, and England, he was sure, would never pledge herself to a policy of robbery and spoliation for the supposed benefit of one section of the community to the detriment of the remainder.

* DR. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye) said he had just come from the electorate

outside to which the hon. Member had said there was an appeal, and that being so, he wished to say a word or two to show how he stood upon this matter. He was not quite sure, on the present occasion, what he had to vote for: whether it was the fantastic arrangements for compensation proposed by the hon. Member for York, or the plain issue of compensation or no compensation which was suggested by the hon. Baronet the Member for Camborne. If the issue was whether fair compensation was to be given when licences were taken away, without saying where it was to come from, he was pledged most soundly to vote in favour of that compensation. He had no reason to vote for it except for the pledges he had given. Having addressed the House as "Gentlemen," whereat there were cries of "Order," the hon. Member said it was most difficult for a new Member to remember that there was one thing he must not call hon. Members, namely, Gentleman. He believed that whether he voted for or against the Bill, the licensed interest would support him. [Cries of "Why?"] Because by the action he took during the Rye election he was the cause of the Prime Minister making that celebrated reply to the anxious prayer of the poor publicans, and he claimed on that account, the eternal gratitude of the licensed victuallers of the United Kingdon for the rest of his natural life. His hon. friend the Member for the Spen Valley agreed with compensation on certain terms, and his hon. friend opposite, the Member for Tonbridge, said he would not vote for the details of the Bill, but only on the question of compensation. He himself was going to vote for compensation, or else not vote at all, but he should like to hear some authoritative view on the subject which would give a lead and tell the House what it was to vote for.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): From the maiden speech we have recently listened to I am satisfied that whatever we may think of the arguments advanced or the views held by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Camborne Division, from all quarters of the House we rejoice to see him once more amongst us. Although he has taken part in the debates of the House to-day for the first time since his return, and spoken as a new Member, it is on the old subject on which he has spoken in days gone by. The hon. Gentleman who has just addressed us has done much to relieve this side of the House from the sorrows of the Rye election. He has delivered a speech which was singularly refreshing, but which, I also venture to say, has brought consternation and dismay into all quarters of the House, because he has asked a question it is difficult to answer to his own satisfaction, and has stated it in such a manner as to make the task of anyone making the reply to his question an exceedingly difficult one. He says he is pledged to vote for compensation, but the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for York, which proposes compensation, is so ridiculous that he will not vote for it at all.

*DR. HUTCHINSON: It is not the compensation I object to, but the means of providing it

MR. WALTER LONG: So I said, and therefore the first opportunity which the hon. Gentleman has of performing his pledge places him in this difficulty, and he therefore asks us to advise him what he had best do. I am afraid he will find himself in a position of considerable difficulty, and I do not know that the Rules of Parliament have made any other provision for such a condition of things than that the hon. Member should efface himself on this question, and, having stated what he thinks of it, should take no part in the division whatever. I wish very much that my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Home Affairs was not absent from the House on this occasion. I regret his absence, not only because of the accident which occasions it, but because, had he been present to-day, it would have fallen to his lot to deal with this Question this afternoon. My hon. friend the Member for York in the very able, moderate, closely reasoned, and temperate speech, in which he introduced this Bill commenced by saying that many would possibly wonder at the fact that he had started out to deal with this difficult problem. Difficult it undoubtedly is, and if there had been any reason for questioning that point we should have been satisfied by the speeches made this afternoon that it is a question which has probably caused this House more difficulty in the last twenty-five or thirty years than any other question that has come before it. This is the first time we have debated it on a Bill dealing with compensation which comes from this side of the House and I regret that my right hon. friend the Home Secretary is not here to deal with it instead of myself. What are the causes that have led to the introduction of this measure by my hon. and learned friend? The case for the rejection of the Bill has been argued with great ability and moderation by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley, and I could not help thinking while listening to him that if his speech, and the closely reasoned and temperate speech of the hon. Member for York, could be taken as accurately representing the two sides of the question, a conference outside the House of Commons might show that the problem is not incapable of solution. But the conclusion which the hon. Member for the Spen Valley arrived at brought with it the conviction that no such Utopia was within reach, at all events at present. It seems to me that the speech of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley was one which would have been more suitable had he proposed to support the Second Reading of the Bill with the intention of moving large and far-reaching Amendments in Committee. He undoubtedly pointed out—as indeed anybody who criticises a Bill of this kind can point out—that the Bill falls short in many respects of the requirements of the case. My hon. and learned friend the Member for York would, I am convinced, be the first to allow that, in dealing with a question of this kind, it is obvious that any measure proposed in this House, and especially one by a private Member who has not had the advantage of official draftsmanship, experience and knowledge, would certainly require consideralbe alteration before it could be efficiently dealt with. But when we had from the hon. Member in clear and statesmanlike terms his admission that given certain reforms and advantages, he would be prepared to accept the principle of compensation, and when the hon. Member for York stated distinctly that his object was not to tie the House to the details and machinery of the Bill, or the methods of compensation, but to lay down the particular principle that where for the public good men are deprived of their property, when their conduct has been above reproach, they should be given compensation, I did think there was opened before us a possible field for compromise. But the conclusion of the hon. Member's speech dashed these hopes to the ground. He told us that it is his intention to do all he can to secure the rejection of the measure.

What are the causes which have led to the introduction at this particular moment of this particular measure? The hon. Member told us in his speech that if the proposals of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and of Mr. Goschen, when they were both Members of the Government, had been adopted, the particular reform to which he attaches so much importance, the reduction in the number of licences, could not have been so effectually carried out or to so large an extent as it has been without any system of compensation. It is obvious that any statement of that kind, based as it must be on statistics, is one which should be most carefully investigated before being accepted as absolutely reliable. The figures I will give to the House will show what is, at all events, the main cause of the present situation, and they point to my mind in an exactly contrary direction to the inferences drawn by the hon. Member. It is perfectly true that there is a strict legal right on the part of justices to refuse the renewal of licences. The fact to which he himself referred is proof, if no other were needed—the fact that every year the holder is obliged to apply for the renewal of his licence. But we have not been arguing upon the ground of the strict legal argument. My hon. and learned friend pointed out with much force that custom has given in this country rights of property which, it may be said without exaggeration, are as sacred and as fully recognised as rights established by law. Is it not the case that round this system of licensing there has grown up the unquestioned belief, not only on the part of licence-holders but of the great mass of the people, that if the conduct of the holder of a licence is satisfactory and the requirements of the Bench are complied with, the licence will go on as if it were permanently, and not annually, held? If that is not so, why is it that you have taxed it as you have, and assessed it at a special rateable value, and called on the owner to pay during his life, and his representatives after his death on the extreme value? It is said that is not the result of custom or recognition of their property by law, but is owing simply to the fact that they are taken at their market value. But what has given that market value, and why is it that they have come to these large amounts? Take the case where licensed premises are the property of a limited liability company. Examine the figures in their financial statements, and see what is written off for depreciation and loss. Does anyone pretend, for a moment, that if this class of property was regarded as having only a transitory or annual value, that the writings-off in respect of possible loss would not be increased ten or twenty-fold before the returns could be financially sound or reasonably accurate? Why have these writings-off not been made and why has this market value been acquired by this property? Is it not because, owing I admit, to custom and not to law, the holding of a licence has been regarded as carrying with it rights of property, quite different from those with which it is now sought to endow them by those who advocate a policy of wholesale withdrawal? When we look at the figures for the last few years these facts are, I venture to say, emphasised in the strongest possible manner.

I hold in my hand a table showing the number of licences refused in the years 1890, 1891, 1895, 1900, and 1902. In 1890 186 licences were refused on all grounds, and of those 43 were refused on the ground that they were not required, 37 as not required and for other reasons, and 106 for other grounds. In the following year the total was 339—not required 103, not required and other reasons 53, and other grounds only—that is to say misconduct, etc.—183. For last year the figures are very striking. The total number rose to 640—not required 241, not required and other reasons 221, and other grounds only 178. These figures show quite clearly that the sudden increase in refusals has been mainly on the ground that they are not required, in other words, that the licences have been refused in the interests of the community as a whole and not for any fault committed by the licencee or because of the unsuitability of the licensed premises. The figures also show that there is a counter case to be considered to that presented by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley. The figures do not take into account appeals to Quarter Sessions. I am not dealing now with the actual number of licences suppressed as the result of appeals: I am dealing solely with the point raised by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley in regard to the action of the Courts of First Instance. The point I am making is that the refusal of licences has been mainly if not entirely due to the fact that they are not required and not from any misconduct on the part of the licence-holder. That is the main reason for the introduction of this Bill. I have seen with great regret and some little resentment statements made to the effect that because many Members of this side of the House do not approve of this policy as it is now presented, they are opposed to the action of these good, devoted men, who during recent years have been seeking to bring about a reform in connection with licensed houses. I do not think it necessary or fair that any body of men, however enthusiastic or zealous they may be, should seek to claim a monopoly of this work. Though the methods by which we work may be different, at all events we claim credit for having the same objects in view, and we are justified in contending that by these summary and unjust methods, as some regard them, you are more likely to arrest the progress of this beneficent work than to further it. No one who has watched the work of these men, amongst whom are to be found the bishops of the country and clergy of all denominations, cannot fail to feel admiration and respect for them. Strongly though some, perhaps the majority, on this side feel in regard to these questions of the right of property, if we believed honestly that it would be impossible to assert this right and protect it without interrupting and destroying the good work which these men have done, if we had to choose between the rights of property and the advancement of a cause so important, we would run the risk rather than lose the advancement. We contend that if you go to work moderately and temperately on the lines of the speeches which have been made here to-day, and with due regard for the rights and property of others, you are more likely to advance the cause you have at heart than if you adopt harsher, more abrupt, and less just and fair methods.

The hon. Member for the Spen Valley has found much fault with the details of the Bill. I am bound to say that if we were discussing the Bill pure and simple, and not the question of compensation or no compensation. ["No, no."] Well, the hon. Member for Camborne put it that the question was whether there should be compensation or no compensation, and to my knowledge the speeches on the other side have been devoted largely, if not wholly, to that question. The speech of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley, the most comprehensive delivered from that side of the House, was largely devoted not to a criticism of the details of the Bill, but to an exposition of his views and the views of those who act with him, why compensation in the form suggested in the Bill was not to be accepted. I admit with the hon. Member that so far as the Bill itself is concerned there is much to be said in criticism of it. I am not sure that it would not carry us farther than the promoters seek to go, I do not attach so much importance to the inadequacy of the scheme of contribution, surely a short Amendment in Committee would remove that difficulty. It would be easy to increase the percentage. I believe it is the duty of the Government to ask the House of Commons to consider the case before them as involving on the one hand a continuance of the policy with which we have recently become familiar, and on the other hand the substitution for it of one by which, when the licences are taken away without cause shown, compensation shall be payable to those who are deprived of them. Therefore I say I do not stop to criticise the details now. The Bill carries within it the recognition and affirmation of the principle of compensation in certain cases, and it would be impossible, in the light of the declarations that we have made from time to time, in face of the views which we hold, and which the majority of Members on this side hold, to recommend the House not to support the measure. I am not blind to the fact that there is a wider question than the one immediately dealt with by the Bill which is creating widespread interest. We have been reminded of the fact that Quarter Sessions are now considering appeals. That is a very important fact, and has a very powerful bearing on this particular Bill. It follows that the case before us is not as yet complete. All that we know is that in some cases the action of the magistrates has appeared to carry with it some injustice to an important section of the community. Pending the decision of the appeals the problem is not fully before us, and therefore the complete solution cannot possibly be considered, much less immediately found. The proposal of my hon. and learned friend may therefore not unnaturally be described as inadequate and insufficient, and one which will not meet the whole difficulty or deal with the whole trouble. But the Bill affirms the first principle of compensation where property is taken in the public interest, and for that reason I cannot recommend the House to reject it. It is not the first time the Unionist Party has identified itself with this policy. In 1888, and subsequently, we made proposals which were criticised and condemned; but, at all events, whether they were sufficient or insufficient, they are the only practical proposals which have been made during recent times affording an opportunity to deal with this pressing and difficult question. If they failed to find support in Parliament, the blame does not rest with us, but with those who rejected them because, no doubt, they honestly and conscientiously believed that they would do more harm than good. I confidently submit to the House that our action is not only just and practicable, but that it is also consistent.

*Mr. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I confess I have listened with a good deal of bewilderment to the right hon. Gentleman's attempt to vindicate the action of the Government. During a large part of his speech he drew for us a somewhat lurid picture of what I gathered to be, in his judgment, the predatory action of the magistrates of this country in invading a form of property which, though not guaranteed by law, is, as the right hon. Gentleman tells us, sacred by custom. Of course one naturally drew from that the inference that the Government was confronted with such a serious state of things that there devolved upon their own shoulders the responsibility of taking some steps to arrest the mischief. But, when we came to the close of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, a totally different note was sounded. The action of the predatory benches of justices is being reviewed by Quarter Sessions, the whole matter is still *sub judice* according to him; and, being still *sub judice*, he appeals to the House of Commons to pass a private Member's Bill in order to settle it. I am totally at a loss to understand what that means. I take issue with the right hon. Gentleman as to the point which he describes as being opened up for us to decide—namely, the principle of compensation or no compensation. I deny absolutely that that is the issue, and I am going to give reasons for that denial. This Bill has been so completely pulverised in the earlier stages of this debate by the most able and convincing speech of my hon. friend the Member for Spen Valley, that I have to apologise for keeping the House for more than a few minutes in further considering it. Whatever may have been the intention of the framer, in my judgment the effect of the Bill is this — on the one hand to fetter, and for all practical purposes to annihilate, the discretion which the law at present gives to the justices, and on the other hand to provide a method of so-called compensation which is unworkable and even illusory. As to the existing law, I shall show the right hon. Gentleman that there is really no doubt. It has been stated so often that one can hardly be excused for stating it again, but if I may endeavour to formulate it in a sentence; it is this: that, as regards the renewal of an expired licence—there is no such thing as an existing licence at the end of the year—the justices have an absolute discretion. When it is said, as it is said, and properly said, that it is a judicial discretion, what is meant is not a discretion to be exercised as in litigation according to settled rules of law and methods of procedure, but a discretion exercised in a judicial temper, not capriciously or whimsically, not in deference to any preconceived theory or formula [MINISTERIAL cheers]—certainly, that is most important, not in deference to any preconceived theory or formula, one way or the other—but upon a full consideration of all the relevant facts which affect particular cases. There is no doubt that is the law. Nor is there any doubt that among these relevant facts, sometimes the only relevant fact is the question whether or not particular premises are required to meet the reasonable necessities of the district which they serve. That is the law laid down twelve years ago in the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," whatever doubt there may have been before. I agree there was doubt, because the Government, of which the right hon. Gentleman and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer were Members, when they made their proposals in 1888, did not know what the law was; they were wrongly advised. The scheme of compensation for which the right hon. Gentleman claims such credit was recommended to the House on the ground that they were conferring on the magistrates a power which the magistrates did not already possess to deprive the publican of a licence on grounds other than those of misconduct, and that the exercise of that new power might reasonably be accompanied by compensation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Not on the magistrates. We created a new tribunal, the County Council.

*MR. ASQUITH: Be it so. That has nothing whatever to do with the point, whether magistrates or County Council. The ground of compensation was that licences were to have a new element of precariousness introduced in their tenure, and therefore it was only fair that the licencees should receive compensation We know now that it was not so. The House of Lords so decided, and the proposition I submit with confidence to the House is this—that, at any rate for the last twelve years, no one has been able to apply for a new licence without full knowledge that it was within the discretion of the justices to refuse its renewal simply on the ground that there was an excessive supply of public-houses in the district. It is that fundamental principle of our licensing law that this Bill proposes to reverse, and that is the main—I will not say the only—ground of my opposition to it.

What does the Bill provide? In the sixth clause it provides that the total ascertained value of the licences of which the renewal is refused shall not exceed the sum determined to be available for compensation. What does that mean? It means that, whereas the justices now can act perfectly freely with a single-minded regard to the interests of the public, for all time to come the limits of that free action will be curtailed, and curtailed, as my hon. friend the Member for Spen Valley has shown, within the narrowest and most meagre limits possible. He estimates the total fund to be raised for the whole of England and Wales, under the Bill, for the purpose of compensation, even if the full powers are exercised, at £500,000. Inasmuch as every licence of which the renewal is refused, is to be paid at its full value, with the goodwill attaching to the premises, it is obvious that the Bill would not only paralyse, but to a large extent extinguish, the discretion of the justices. In my opinion, that is sufficient to induce the House to reject the Second Reading.

The right hon. Gentleman tells us that the vote is to be taken on the issue of compensation. I do not think it is. My hon. friend who is opposed to compensation is naturally opposed to this Bill. But the question whether or not that is the issue is determined by whether a person can logically vote against the Second Reading of this Bill, although he is in favour of compensation.

MR. WALTER LONG: I was quoting from the speech of the hon. Member for Camborne who distinctly laid it down that the issue was compensation or no compensation.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: And I quoted the words of the hon. and learned Member who moved the Second Reading and who, towards the close of his speech, said he put the issue on the broad ground of compensation.

*MR. ASQUITH: With all possible respect to my hon. friend and the hon. and learned Member, neither of them has the power to define the issue to be decided. I have never before heard such a proposition advanced — that because an individual Member in the course of the debate says a certain point is the issue before us the whole House has to accept it. If we are going to have the opinions expressed in the course of the debate quoted, what is the position of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley who moved the rejection? He is in favour of compensation, and he explained the grounds on which, and the limits within which, he is in favour of it; so that when the rejection has been moved by an hon. Member in that position I am entitled to say that every Member who votes against the Bill must not be taken to vote against compensation.

I want, however, to make my own position clear. I have never seen anything opposed to the theory of our licensing law in a scheme under which the reduction of licences might be facilitated and accelerated by some form of compensation payable to the trade by the trade. If it were correct to say that a licence is a form of property, if this extraordinary theory that a custom can arise which is in violation of the statute law and a contradiction of the decisions of the highest tribunals in the country, and if this overriding custom can give a proprietary interest where the law expressly says no proprietary interest exists, then the person who ought to pay compensation is not the trade, but the State. The State, in the interest of the public, then takes away from a man that which is his private property, and wherever that is done, according to the practice and theory of the law, compensation is payable out of State funds. This Bill is, on that theory, most illogical. Why ought the unfortunate publicans, who have done no harm, who have been carrying on a legitimate business, to be taxed in the way proposed by the Bill? The person who is doing wrong is the State if the poor publican whose licence is not renewed is the owner of property compulsorily expropriated by the State. The right hon. Gentleman's doctrine carries him a great deal too far. The way in which the matter presents itself to me is this. I want if I can to facilitate the action of the justices in reducing the excessive supply of the facilities for drinking; and I am prepared to go a long way in the direction of facilitating that action as long as I do not infringe public policy and impose on the community a burden which the community ought not fairly to bear. What is the existing state of things? Justices in a district find that there is an excessive supply of public-houses. They believe that the existence of that excessive supply affords temptations to drink, and provides facilities for excessive drinking which lead to the demoralisation of the community. The right hon. Gentleman told us, almost in tones of horror, that between 1891 and last year the number of licence renewals which had been refused as not being required had risen from 103 to 241. I was more surprised than the right hon. Gentleman at the total, because most hon. Members could easily point to 241 public-houses of which they themselves have some knowledge — I do not say how acquired — which are clearly unnecessary for any legitimate purpose. Even before the appeals have taken place that is the total extent to which these predatory justices have exercised their powers. I must say, therefore, that we appear to be dealing with a very small matter. I am not content with 241. In the public interest I should like to see the number largely increased, provided it can be done justly. What is the position of the justices? With cases of misconduct we are not concerned. The justices find an excessive number of public-houses in a district, and that the licencees are conducting their business in a perfectly legitimate manner. The justices are in a dilemma. Either they must hold their hands and not do what public interest clearly requires by reducing the number of licences, or they must select a victim, or a series of victims, among this innocent class of persons. That is a most invidious duty. I do not wonder that the consequence is that the justices do very often hold their hands when the public interest requires that they should act. No fair-minded man can overlook the hardship inflicted on the selected victim or victims; one is taken, and the other is left. He has done no more harm than his neighbour, but the lot happens to fall upon him. He has no legal right to compensation, because he accepted his licence with his eyes open; but I think it is fair that those who remain as survivors should in some form or other, if a practicable form can be devised, be made to—I will not say compensate the victim—but provide a solatium to the victim. That is a more accurate term than compensation, because compensation applies only to the case in which you are taking from a man that which legally belongs to him — a solatium should at the same time remedy the hardship done, and set free the magistrates to perform their work. It is on that ground, and within those limits only, that I, for my part, can ever assent to compensation. But if a practicable scheme can be devised to throw the burden, if it is to be a pecuniary burden, on those who, to some extent, benefit by the enhanced value of the monopoly left in their hands, I see no objection to it in principle.

This Bill, however, does not raise any such point. In my judgment no scheme of compensation of any kind can be tolerated which does not also leave absolutely free the unfettered discretion of the justices. I entirely agree with the view that instead of, as in this Bill, the amount of reduction being limited by the amount of the levy on the trade, it ought to be exactly the the other way. Another condition, equally important, is this—that there should be a time limit for existing holders of licences. Whatever case, either of equity or compassion, can be made in favour of existing holders of licences, is entirely due to causes which are passing away, because everyone now knows what the law is; he acts with his eyes open, and has no excuse for being deceived. I thought it right to make this statement, because I entirely demur to the suggestion that the issue which the right hon. Gentleman has tried to foist upon us is a question of compensation or no compensation when we come to the absolute settlement of the matter. For my part, I shall give my Vote on the merits of this Bill, and upon no other issue of any sort or kind. Because I believe that this Bill is improvident, unnecessary, and unworkable, because it interferes with the discretion which the licensing law reposes in the justices, which ought to be the foundation of any wise and just system of licensing, I shall vote, without any hesitation, against the Second Reading.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I will not detain the House many minutes, but I really must say one word on the very singular speech to which we have just listened. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in saying at the beginning of his remarks that it was always possible to find some logical reason for voting either for or against the Second Reading of a Bill brought forward on a Friday afternoon by a private Member, but I venture to say that it is more in conformity with the tradition and practice of this House, when dealing with the second reading of a Bill, to vote, not according to this or that clause or detail, but according to the general principles involved in the Bill. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman told us he was going to vote without hesitation against the Second Reading of this Bill, I thought he was going to tell us what was the fundamental point of principle on which he differed from the framers of the Bill and the great majority of gentlemen on this side. Whatever merits or demerits the right hon. Gentleman's oratory may have—and I am one of its greatest admirers—not even his sternest critics would say that as a rule he was wanting in lucidity. But if I was asked why the right hon. Gentleman is going without hesitation to vote against this Bill, I would say it was because he dislikes the word "compensation," and likes the word "solatium." "Solatium" may be better English or better Latin—I do not know—it may be a more proper phrase to carry out the object which most people call compensation, but "solatium," as he uses it, is compensation; and why, therefore, he should vote against a Bill which does give under the name of compensation what he calls solatium I really am utterly at a loss to understand. To whom does the right hon. Gentleman think solatium—I will not use the dreadful word "compensation"—ought to be given? It ought to be given, in his view, to every holder of a licence from whom that licence is taken away without fault of the licence-holder. And yet he objects to this Bill, or, I suppose, any Bill which fetters the discretion of the magistrates. It follows from these two propositions that the fund from which the solatium is to be derived must be practically unlimited, or a fund, at all events, so large that the most sweeping reduction of licences would not make any undue inroad upon it. Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to find such a fund? He is not. ["The trade."] Then we now understand the right hon. Gentleman's position to be this: Every magistrate is to have unfettered discretion; every licence-holder who loses his licence through no fault of his own is to have a solatium; and the trade by some machinery which neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any other human being can devise ["Oh!"] is to provide the necessary money. Let us take a case which I hope is imaginary. Let us suppose the hon. baronet the Member for Camborne had his way and persuaded every bench of magistrates at Brewster Sessions to adopt the principles which he has advocated with admirable courage and marvellous persistency during so many years. I suppose the result would be that these gentlemen, without preconceived notions and in a judicial frame of mind, would take away every licence throughout the whole country. If they are not to be able to do that, then you are interfering with that sacred discretion which the right hon. Gentleman says he would perish on the floor of the House rather than touch. I should like to know, then, how the solatium is to be obtained which would satisfy not the legal claims, but the equitable or charitable and eleemosynary claims which the right hon. Gentleman allows, of the various licence-holders who would be deprived by such a sweeping measure as that of their means of livelihood. That alone shows how absolutely inconsistent is the right hon. Gentleman's position. Unless you have an unlimited fund it is absolutely necessary to fetter the discretion of the magistrates. The right hon. Gentleman, with all his lucidity, appears to me to wish to carry out two inconsistent lines of policy at once. He does not know on which side of the fence he is. I do not know whether the ardent spirit of the hon. Baronet the Member for Camborne is satisfied by the change of phrase from compensation to solatium.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I have nothing to do with solatium.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is really rather depressing to those who anxiously look to by-elections to learn what the country thinks to find that of our two latest recruits one tells us that he is bound above all things to vote for compensation, and the other tells us he will not vote for compensation even when it is called solatium. I am sorry to think that even the successes, on which I congratulate hon. Gentlemen opposite, in the recent by-elections, have not conduced apparently to that harmony in their ranks which we would all have desired to see. In truth it is quite evident that the right hon. Gentleman has not helped either the House or himself by the speech which he has to-day delivered. He is going to vote against the Bill, although it carries out his own principles. ["No."] As far as the Bill does not carry out his own principles, no Bill in the world can carry them out, because the policy he has described is that of an unlimited power of taking away licences, an unlimited power of giving solatium, but a limited fund out of which the solatium should be paid. That policy cannot be carried out, because the laws of arithmetic happen to be against it. In these circumstances I would venture respectfully to suggest that the question we have before us is this—whether we ought or ought not, under the name of solatium or compensation, to do something for those persons who, wisely or unwisely, are deprived of what, if not property, is taxed as property, rated as property,

and bought and sold as property, and when that is taken away without any fault of their own. We on this side prefer to call it compensation and mean to vote for it under that name. The right hon. Gentleman prefers to call it solatium, and means to vote against it. I venture to submit that ours is the most consistent, the most logical, and the most moral course that the House can adopt.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I think the hon. Member for Rye must regret that he appealed to the House for instruction as to the course he should take on this Bill, because the advice he received from the two right hon. Gentlemen opposite must leave him in a state of worse confusion than ever. The Prime Minister, in the beginning of his speech, found fault with my right hon. friend beside me for having disputed the fact that this was a Bill the main and sole object of which was to get the assent of the House to the principle of compensation, and the right hon. Gentleman did this, although my right hon. friend explained, in the most emphatic way, that his objection was not on the ground of compensation, but on the ground that the Bill altered the law as it at present exists; that it did away with the discretion of magistrates, paralysed their action, and created that which does not exist at present—a vested interest in the holding of a licence. These were the objections my right hon. friend made to the Bill, and for these reasons we shall vote against it. But the right hon. Gentleman held up the flag of compensation, and tried through the greater part of his speech to convince the House that compensation would be impossible without restricting the discretion of magistrates. So, according to his theory, the main and cardinal principle of the Bill, the ground on which he supports it, is that it restricts the discretion of magistrates and interferes with their authority; and all I need say now is that that is the very reason why we shall vote against it. The right hon. Gentleman seemed not to be aware when he talked of compensation and the question of reduction of licences that both sections of the Royal Commission recommended it in the most explicit and unmistakable way, and laid down methods by which it could be applied; so all he has said on that subject goes by the board. But if this matter is of such importance, and if so much harm is being done to innocent people, if it is a matter of such infinite complexity, and if such terrible consequences follow from mistaken steps being adopted, why do not the Government themselves deal with the question? Why does the right hon. Gentleman make a speech to a deputation, which implies a slur on the magistrates of this country, in his zest to prevent their action in the reduction of the number of public houses. Why does he not, with his responsibility, take the necessary steps for introducing a measure dealing with this great question? Instead of that the Government are going to support a Bill which, according to the President of the Local Government Board, is faulty in all its details and methods; and which he supports only as a sort of declaration of a pious opinion in favour of compensation, on which subject he would have probably nearly a unanimous House, and which will not be at all represented by the Division; while, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government puts forward the restriction of the power of magistrates to reduce licences as the great object to be kept in view, and on that ground, and apparently that ground only, he supports the Bill. Instead of offering fantastic and irreconcilable reasons for supporting a Bill of which they themselves say they do not approve, would it not be better and more in accordance with the importance of the question if they announced their intention of themselves dealing with it by a measure avoiding the evils they have pointed out and meeting the necessities of the case.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.) said he rose for the purpose of making a suggestion which he thought if adopted would remove some of the objections of the moderate and reasonable opponents of the Bill. There was a general consensus of opinion that the number of licences should be reduced, if this could be done without injustice or cost to the community. For his part he did not consider it just to make the trade compensate itself. His suggestion was that if an application was made for a new licence it should be granted if the applicant offered to surrender at least two licences for the one granted, and of at least equal value, the value to be settled by arbitration in the usual way. He would give an illustration. In a new neighbourhood, where a great deal of building was going on, a decent inn was required. The applicant having licences which he could surrender, and being sure of his licence, was able to build a good house in every way suitable. He was told there were plenty of places near large towns where such a licence would be worth as much as £10,000. The licencee would then be willing to surrender, say, ten licences, worth on the average £1,000 each. The result would be a reduction of nine licences, which would be surrendered where they were really not required, and for those houses of a bad class they would then get instead a good house of great value, in a locality where it was really wanted. The effect would be that the number of licensed houses would be reduced. It would pay the licencee, because he would only have the expense of keeping up one house instead of ten, even if he did not do as much business as he did in the ten houses. The owner would be better off, and nobody would be any worse off, and the public convenience would be studied, the cause of temperance would be promoted, the licencee benefited, and it would be good all round. He had discussed this proposal with men of great experience who were largely interested in the trade, and he was told that the effect in his own neighbourhood, and in the neighbourhood of large towns, would be very great indeed, and there would be a very large reduction in the number of licences if his suggestion were carried out.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said he would say in a few sentences what he desired to put before the House. He had had the honour of serving upon the Royal Commission, and he represented Wales, which was included in this Bill, and he wished to say that the dominant sentiment of Wales was against this Bill. During the course of the debate he thought they had lost sight of the main point at issue. The question was whether this Bill would conduce to the sobriety of the nation or the reverse? Upon all the grounds which had been stated, and on account of the way in which it tied the hands of the magistrates, the result of passing this Bill would be that it would hinder that cause which all sections of the House desired to advance. There was one further point he wished to mention. The hon. Member who represented Tonbridge made it perfectly clear that whatever might be in the Bill itself in regard to the source from which compensation was to come, he did not think it would be sufficient to rely only upon compensation from the trade, and he made it clear that in his opinion the taxpayer would have to be taxed for the purposes of the Bill. Therefore in considering the real issue they should take into account that important fact. They could not in any way raise the question of compensation without raising the question of the individual taxpayer. Believing as he did that this Bill was unworkable, and that it was prejudicial to the principle which most of them held to be essential to the success of temperance reform, he should greatly regret it if the result of the debate was to cause the House to adopt the line taken up by this Bill. Although the Prime Minister had made light of the debate, the issue was a serious and a very important one, and he hoped the House would make it evident to the country that they were not going to deal with this important question except in the spirit of doing something which would promote and not hinder the progress of the temperance cause.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) said this was not simply a question of compensation or no compensation. He had listened to almost every word that had been said in the debate, and he had studied the Bill very carefully, and it seemed to him that the concluding lines of the proviso in Clause 6 really dominated the whole Bill. The Bill took away the discretion of the magistrates in return for what? The sum of 6s. 8d. per cent. had been mentioned, but they had heard that the rate of insurance against loss of licences ranged from 5s. to 15s. per cent. He could not see that the Bill would facilitate the reduction of licences. His point was that 6s. 8d. per cent. was not likely to do more than cover the natural shrinkage in licences which was now going on. The Bill was, therefore, not a practical one. [MINISTERIAL interruptions and cries of "Divide, divide."]

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said that undoubtedly it was somewhat difficult to know what they were to vote upon. He was not in favour of compensation, and he was not going to be pledged by anything or anybody. He considered it a most dangerous thing for the State to take in hand a matter of this kind, which he believed really belonged to the trade. If the trade came and asked for assistance in adjusting a scheme of mutual insurance they might consider the proposal. For his part, he did not intend to support compensation at all. He thought the State ought not to touch the matter but leave it to the trade.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I think the House is indebted to the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken, for he has really done something to bring back the House to a clear conception of the issue with which we have to deal. Sir, it is the common practice for those who desire to oppose a Bill and at the same time to leave themselves absolutely uncommitted, to deal with the matter as if it were a question of details or of particular clauses. After all, that is entirely contrary to the practice which ought to prevail with regard to discussion and votes upon the Second Reading of a Bill. On the Second Reading of a Bill you are not dealing with the details of the Bill. They have to be considered in Committee afterwards. You are dealing only with the main principle which is conveyed in the Bill. I defy anybody who is fair and impartial to deny that the main principle before the House to-day is that, where a licence is taken away without any fault of the owner, some compensation, from some source or other, ought to be given. The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken has said most fairly and straightforwardly that he is opposed to anything of that kind, and the hon. baronet the Member for Camborne and other hon. Members who have taken part in the debate have said the same thing. That is the logical point of view to take. Those who are opposed to all compensation are justified in voting against the Bill, and are bound to vote against it; but we, on the other hand, who are in favour of giving compensation in these cases, are bound, in my opinion, to vote for the Second Reading, even though, as in my own case, there are many points in the Bill of which I do not approve. We are logical. The hon. and learned Gentleman on the other side is logical, but those hon. Gentlemen who are in favour of a solatium and vote against the Bill are neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring.

MR. LOGAN (Leicestershire, Harborough) said he desired in two or three words to say why it was his intention to vote against this Bill. He opposed this measure because he thought it was a Bill brought in to obtain the sanction of the House and the Government for a form of endowment to the brewers of this country. He would say to those who supported this Bill in that if they desired to compensate those in the trade who lost their licences through no fault of their own it was quite within their power to do it without coming to the House either to get its sanction or to get suggestions as to how they should do it. The trade was almost the wealthiest and most powerful in the country and for the members of that trade to come to the House of Commons and say that they were unable, of their own initiative, to compensate those of their fellows who lost their licences through no fault of their own was something that he could not understand. He had a great many objections to this Bill but briefly he would give two reasons. The first was that if it were carried into law it would take away the discretionary power now vested in the magistrates; and the second was that he held very strongly that if the people of this country in their discretion considered there were too many public-houses in a neighbourhood they were absolutely within their right in declaring that some of them should be closed, without being called upon to provide out of public funds compensation for those whose licences were taken away.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 266; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 69.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther, H. T.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Fras. T. (*Windsor*)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Col. H. F. (*Middlesex*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex H. (*Shropshire*
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Worc*
Chamberlayne, T. (*South'mpt'n*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Delany, William
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gordon, Hn J. E (*Elgin and N'rn*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert

Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,RtHnLordG(*Midd'x*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent,Ashf'd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords. N.W*
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHnH.(*Som'rs't,E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(*Sheffield,Brightside*
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard,John(*Kent Faver'h'm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks. N.R.*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockie, John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col.CharlesW.(*Evesham*
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(*Bristol,S*
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Lowther,RtHnJW(*Cum.Penr.*
Lucas,Reginald J.(*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver,SirLewis(*Edinb'rgh, W*
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Massey-Mainwaring,Hn.W.F.
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(*Wigt'n*
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (*Hants*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Mooney, John J.
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan,Col.JohnP.(*Galway,N.*
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid*)
O'Brien, P. J. *Tipperary, N.*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Redmond, Jn. E. (*Waterford*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford,East*
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*
Stanley, Hn. Arthur(*Ormskirk*
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,RtHn.J.G(*Oxford Univ*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.SirWilliamH
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Webb, Col. William George
Welby,Lt-Col.A.C.E(*Taunton*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams,RtHnJPowell-(*Birm*
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Butcher and Mr. Wharton.

NOES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baird, John George Alexander
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brown, Geo. M. (*Edinburgh*)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(*Cardigan*
Denny, Colonel
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Furness, Sir Christopher
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.

Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David, B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (*Accrington*
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Govern, T.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, Sir William
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Mellor, Rt. Hn. John William
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*
Moss, Samuel
Newnes, Sir George
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (*Durham*
Palmer, G. Wm. (*Reading*)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H C (*North'mb. Tyneside*
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, A. (*Carmarthen, E.*)
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, O. (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. William M'Arthur.

When the tellers presented themselves to announce the result of the Division,

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.) rose and stated that it had been his intention to vote against the Bill, but that he had unfortunately been locked in the other lobby.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understand that the hon. Member passed the tellers?

SIR JAMES HASLETT: Yes, I passed the tellers.

*MR. SPEAKER: Then the hon. Member must be counted in the lobby through which he passed.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday, 19th June.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

ARCHITECTS (REGISTRATION).

Bill to provide for the Registration of Architects, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atherley-Jones and Sir William Coddington.

ARCHITECTS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

"To provide for the Registration of Architects," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 18th May, and to be printed. [Bill 165.]

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 27th April, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area); Great Western Railway (Pension Fund).

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]. Petition for additional provision; of the Promoters of the North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; together with the proposed Amendment annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Petition for additional provision; of Salford Corporation; together with the proposed clause annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill. Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General in Ireland, received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to consolidate the Bills into one Bill if they think fit.

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Draft Provisional Order; ordered, that the evidence taken before the Committee of this House on the Glasgow Corporation (Sewage) Bill, 1896, be referred to the Commissioners appointed under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to inquire into the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Draft Provisional Order.

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.]; Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]. Committee to meet on Thursday next.

Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next.

Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged and Bill committed for Thursday next.

Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 16th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next.

South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 9th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 9th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Wakefield and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bangor Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Life Association of Scotland Bill [H.L.]; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Lima Railways Bill [H.L.]; Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [H.L.]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [H.L.]; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Sutton

Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Denman be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Wandsworth; read, and agreed to.

Winchester Water and Gas Bill; Market Drayton Gas Bill; Ipswich Gas Bill; Great Northern and City Railway Bill; Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill; Broadstairs Gas Bill; Bath Corporation Water Bill; Bridgwater Gas Bill; East Ardsley Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill; Sutton District Water Bill; Midland Railway Bill; London Hydraulic Power Bill; North Middlesex Gas Bill; Maidstone Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Message from the Commons that they have come to the following Resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House, viz.: That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.:

CHARITY COMMISSION.

Fiftieth Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales. (April 1.)

TREATY SERIES.

No. 4. (1903)—Convention between the United Kingdom and the United States of America for the adjustment of the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the territory of Alaska. Signed at Washington, 24th January, 1903. [Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 3rd March, 1903.] (April 1.)

No. 5. (1903)—Convention between the United Kingdom and Denmark for regulating the fisheries outside territorial waters in the ocean surrounding the Faröe Islands and Iceland. Signed at London, 24th June, 1901. [Ratifications exchanged at London, 28th May, 1902.] (April 17th.)

TRADE REPORTS.

I.: Annual Series.

No. 2947. Greece (Thessaly). (April 2.)

No. 2948. Somaliland Protectorate. (April 2.)

No. 2949. France (Brest and District). (April 2.)

No. 2950. Turkey (Constantinople). (April 4.)

No. 2951. Mexico (Mexico). (April 4th.)

No. 2952. United States (Chicago). (April 20.)

No. 2953. Greece (Morea and the Provinces of Acarnania and Ætolia). (April 20.)

No. 2954. Portugal (Foreign Trade). (April 20.)

No. 2955. France (Cherbourg). (April 20.)

No. 2956. Germany (Chemnitz). (April 20.)

No. 2957. Greece (the Cyclades). (April 22.)

No. 2958. Servia. (April 22.)

No. 2959. Germany. (April 24.)

No. 2960. France (Havre). (April 24.)

II. Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on trade and subjects of general interests (with Appendix), 1902. (April 22.)

RUSSIA (NEW GENERAL CUSTOMS TARIFF).

Translation of the New General Customs Tariff for the European Frontiers of Russia, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs duty contained in the tariff with the rates at present in force on imports into European Russia from the United Kingdom. (April 2.)

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Forty-fifth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended 31st December 1902. (April 2.)

LUNACY (SCOTLAND) ACT.

Forty-fifth Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. (April 4.)

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.

Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-fourth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland. (April 4.)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Return showing—

I. The expenditure from the grant for public education in Scotland in the year 1902

II. A list of day schools aided from parliamentary grant, with statistics relating thereto, for 1901–1902, and supplementary list of schools, &c.

III. Summarised statistics of day schools in receipt of annual grants under the Code, for the year ended 31st August 1902. (April 4.)

EXPLOSIVES (IGNITION OF POWDER AT THE E.C. POWDER COMPANY'S FACTORY, AT STONE, NEAR DARTFORD).

Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an accident which occurred in the drying house for smokeless powder at the factory of the E.C. Powder Company, Limited, at Beacon Wood Stone, near Dartford, on the 3rd March, 1903. (April 6.)

ARMY.

I. Report of Committee on expenses incurred by officers of the Army. (April 7.)

II. (Medical Department) — Report for the year 1901. (April 17.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTION PETITION (BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY).

Report made by Morton William Smith, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, the Commissioner appointed for the trial of the Petition against the election of a town councillor for the Castle Fields Ward of the borough of Shrewsbury, holden on the 1st day of November, 1902. (April 7.)

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report for December, 1902. (April 7.)

FISHERY BOARD FOR SCOTLAND (SALMON FISHERIES).

The cause of salmon disease; a Bacteriological Investigation, by Mr. J. Hume-Patterson, of the Bacteriological Laboratory of the City of Glasgow. (April 8.)

EGYPT, No. 1 (1903).

Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1902. (April 17.)

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-first Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1902—

Part I. General Report. (April 17.)

Part II. Salmon Fisheries. (April 17.)

NATIONAL GALLERY, &c. (SCOTLAND).

Ninth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the Commissioners and Trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, for the year ended 30th September, 1902. (April 17.)

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Forty-sixth Report, for the year 1902, of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of schools and detailed reports. (April 17.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland. (April 17.)

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).

Thirteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland. (April 17.)

CYPRUS.

Report for 1901–1902. (April 20.)

SOUTH AFRICA.

I. Papers relating to the administration of martial law in South Africa. (In continuation of [Cd. 981]). (April 22.)

II. Papers relating to (i.) the finances of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; (ii.) the progress of administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies. (In continuation of [Cd. 1463], February, 1903.) (April 22.)

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Return of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the year ended 31st December, 1902, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. (April 22.)

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903. (April 22.)

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Return for the year ended 31st December, 1902. (April 22.)

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of February, 1903. (April 22.)

WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR, BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT.)

Report on changes in rates of wages and hours of labour in the United Kingdom in 1902, with comparative statistics for 1893–1901. (April 22.)

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Statement of schemes for the formation of education committees approved up to 31st March by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902, showing—

Name of local education authority.

Number of members of the council of the local education authority.

Number of members of the Education Committee.

Number of members of the Education Committee who are necessarily members of the Council.

Number of women who are necessarily on the Education Committee.

Forms of educational experience to be represented on the Education Committee.

Recommendations or nominations (if any). (April 24.)

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES).

Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1903. (April 24.)

COMMITTEE ON BRITISH FORESTRY.

Minutes of evidence taken before the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into and report upon British Forestry; with appendices and index. (April 24.)

AFRICA, No. 2 (1903).

Correspondence relating to the recruitment of labour in the British Central Africa Protectorate for employment in the Transvaal. (April 25.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Fifth Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Further Papers relating to the progress of administration in the Transvaal (in continuation of [Cd. 1551], April, 1903).

QUEENSLAND.

Correspondence relating to the Pacific Island Labourers' Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia (in continuation of [Cd. 1285], 1902).

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2961. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).

No. 2962. Turkey (Palestine).

No. 2963. Nicaragua.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

I. Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of the Act, for the year 1901–1902.

II. Annual report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrews, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act.

COURT OF SESSION (SCOTLAND).

Act of Sederunt anent regulating the places in counties in Scotland at which commissary business shall be conducted.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1902, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Statements of accounts and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade under Section 10 of the "Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870," during the year ended 31st December, 1902.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended 29th September, 1902.

INDIA.

Return of all loans raised in England, under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1903, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, etc.

CREMATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 7 of the Cremation Act, 1902, with reference to the maintenance and inspection of crematoria, the conditions under which cremations may take place, etc.

CERTIFIED DAY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (PARLIAMENTARY GRANT).

Recommendation of the Secretary of State for the Home Department that the sum contributed out of moneys provided by Parliament to managers of any certified day industrial school shall, under certain conditions, continue to be paid in respect of children absent owing to an epidemic.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27th and 28th Victoria, chap. 43, 45th and 46th Victoria, chap. 51, and 50th and 51st Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended 31st December, 1902.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account up to 31st March, 1903.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account up to 31st March, 1903.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury minutes dated—

I. 26th March, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of Naval Education, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the public service are required.

II. 27th March, 1903, declaring that Mrs. Charlotte Ann Reynolds, postmistress, Daventry Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of her department.

III. 28th March, 1903, granting a retired allowance to George F. Laidlaw, rural postman, Christchurch Post Office, under Section 12 of the Superannuation Act.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS (1894 AND 1896.)

Two Orders, numbered 6641 and 6648 respectively, relating to the landing of foreign animals in Great Britain.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account for the year ended 31st December, 1902;

Statement of the total amounts advanced and the total repayments, the amounts of promissory notes given as security, to 31st December, 1902, together with the balance outstanding;

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS AND AMENDING ACTS.

Scheme for the Amendment of the management of Chew's Foundation in the Parish of Dunstable, in the County of Bedford, founded by deed of 16th December 1724, and regulated by a scheme made under the Endowed Schools Acts on 28th June, 1880;

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 29.)

PETITION.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of; of the Airdrie and District Merchants Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

BERWICKSHIRE COUNTY TOWN BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next—(*The Lord Balfour*). (No. 30.)

NAVAL FORCES BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next—(*The Earl Selborne*). (No. 31.)

CONTRACTS (INDIA OFFICE) BILL.

Read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 32.)

OUT-DOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I find, on inquiry, that it will not be convenient to some members of your Lordship's House who are interested in this Bill to take the Second Reading today. I therefore propose to postpone it, probably till this day fortnight.

Second Reading postponed accordingly.

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

Bill brought from the Commons and read 1ª (according to order).

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (the Earl of HARDWICKE): In order to pass this Bill through all its stages to-morrow I shall ask your Lordships to agree to suspend the Standing Orders.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners (No. 34).

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 27th April, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

London County Council (Money) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill, read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to Lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No 3) Bill, reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill, reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [Lords], reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

Western Trust Bill [Lords], reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

North Eastern Railway Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Oakenthorpes; Wooley; Darfield; Skelmersdale; Bolsover; Seymour; Bower; Bulwell; Treeton; Stubbin (No. 1); Pemberton; Benarty; Lassodie; Methilhill; Cardenden; Leven; Wellwood; Dunnikeir; Coaltown of Wemyss; Rosebank; West Wemyss; Donibristle; East Wemyss; Lochgelly; Wellsgreen; Fordell; Windygates; Oakley; Little Raith; Cowdenbeath; Blairhall; Townhill; Kirkford; Buckhaven; Balgonie; and Birley (No. 2.) Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Shepping Wycombe; and West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kirriemuir, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petitions against: from Eccles; Rodley; and Highgate; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Glasford; and Dunoon; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Woolwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petition from Long Eaton, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Sheerness, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Devizes, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Oakenthorpes; Wooley; Darfield Main; Skelmersdale; Bolsover; Seymour; Bulwell; Birley (No. 2); Treeton; Stubbin (No. 1); Pemberton; Methilhill; Cardenden; Leven; Wellwood; Dunnikeir; Coaltown of Wemyss; Rosebank; Donibristle; East Wemyss; Lochgelly; West Wemyss; Wellsgreen; Fordell; Windygates; Oakley; Cowdenbeath; Little Raith; Blairhall; Townhill; Kirkford; Balgonie; Buckhaven; Benarty; and Lassodie Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF MAILS BETWEEN GLASGOW, GREENOCK, AND CAMPBELTOWN).

Copy ordered, "of the Contract dated the 9th day of March, 1903, with the Campbeltown and Glasgow Steam Packet Joint Stock Company, Limited, for the conveyance of mails between Glasgow, Greenock, and Campbeltown; together with a Copy of the Treasury Minute thereon dated the 30th day of March, 1903."—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*)

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the Receipts and Payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland, in the year ended the 31st day of December, 1902, in the Administration of Estates and the Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And, of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*)

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Copy presented, of Fifth Report to the Secretary for Scotland of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Copy presented, of Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports, deposited with the Board of Trade during the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 123.]

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Report of Proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1902, and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th April; *Mr. Cullinan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.]

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of further Papers relating to the Progress of Administration in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUEENSLAND.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to The Pacific Island Labourers' Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE 1903-4.

Estimate presented, of the additional amount required in the year ending 31st March, 1904, to pay a Special Gratuity on Retirement (Superannuation and Retired Allowances) [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 126.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2961 to 2963 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).

Return ordered, "showing (1) the estimated amount of War Charges in South Africa and China incurred up to the 31st day of March, 1903; (2) how these charges have been met; and (3) how the money borrowed has been raised (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 155, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Transfer of Schools.

Mr. George KENYON (Denbigh Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, seeing that the transfer of schools by way of lease or otherwise for a year or term of years makes such schools provided schools, notwithstanding any clause in any agreement to the contrary, he will state whether a voluntary schools association has the power to transfer schools, without the consent in writing of a majority of managers of each school, any by-laws of such association notwithstanding; and whether the Board of Education will take care that these provisions of the Act are clearly made known to managers and trustees.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The persons who can transfer a school held under trust are, by 33 and 34 Vic., c. 75, s. 23, the managers of the school, subject in certain cases to the assent of certain persons in the manner provided by the section. The answer to the Question is therefore in the negative. The Board see no reason for giving any special information on the subject.

State Purchase of Indian Railways.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the shareholders of the East Indian Railway in 1880, the Eastern Bengal Railway in 1884, and the Scinde Railway in 1886, were paid off in annuity stock and in Government stock by Act of Parliament, and in amounts being the full equivalent of the average market value of the properties appropriated by the State, and that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company's settlement in 1900 resulted in the proprietors receiving annuity stock valued at £150 instead of the approved Parliamentary assessed average value of £174 per £100 stock; and whether, seeing that the purchase clauses of these four, and of the Bombay Railway in 1905, and that of the Madras Railway Company in 1907, are practically similar, and in view of the protest made on 31st March on behalf of trustees, banks, insurance companies, and other shareholders by the chairmen of the Bombay Railway Company and the Madras Railway Company, as to the character of this Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company settlement and its injurious effect on their stock, arising from the uncertainty regarding their future treatment, he will consider the advisability of appointing a Select Committee to decide which of these precedents should be followed in 1905 and 1907.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) If it should be decided to purchase either of the two lines in question, and to effect the purchase by means of an annuity, it would, I think, at the time of purchase, be desirable to consider the question whether the power vested by statute in the Secretary of State for India in Council of creating capital stock for the redemption of the annuity should be exercised. I can, however, hold out no prospect that the decision of this question will be entrusted to a Select Committee of this House or to anybody other than the Secretary of State in Council, to whom the control of the revenues of India is by law confided.

Grand National Steeplechase—Cruelty to Horses.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the circumstances under which the Grand National Steeplechase was run this year; whether he is aware that out of twenty-three horses starting only ten finished, that many of the horses fell at various fences, that one horse broke its leg and was destroyed on the course, that another was removed suffering from staggers, and a third from being unduly spurred; whether any inspectors under the Home Office were in attendance, and if it is possible for him to take any steps in connection with such races to prevent cruelty to the animals.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I understand that the facts of the case are substantially as stated in the Question. No inspectors under the Home Office were present, nor have I any inspectors at my disposal for such a purpose. The only Government inspectors whom there is power to appoint in connection with the prevention of cruelty to animals are those under the Act of 1876, who are concerned solely with experiments commonly known under the title of vivisection. The ordinary law for the prevention of cruelty can be set in motion by anyone, and there is no action which I can take in the matter.

Unproductive Labour in Prisons.

Mr. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of cranks, treadwheels, and other forms of unproductive labour at present in use in His Majesty's prisons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) All treadwheels were abolished as a means of labour in His Majesty's prisons as from 1st April, 1902, and there are no cranks or other forms of unproductive labour now in use. At five prisons the machinery of wheels and cranks is still in use as a means of pumping water or flushing drains, but employment on this duty is for ordinary prison service and is no longer a prescribed form of hard labour.

Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Institutions.

Mr. FLOWER: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the number of children in Metropolitan Poor Law schools, workhouses, and infirmaries respectively at the date of the last Return.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) According to the Returns for the second week in April the figures are as follows: District and separate Poor Law schools, 9,277; Infirmaries and sick asylums, 2,000; Workhouses, 1,367. 732 of the children in workhouses are less than three years old, while of those in infirmaries more than 750 are under that age.

Vaccination Registers at Poplar.

Mr. GUTHRIE (Tower Hamlets, Bow): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether his attention has been called to a report made by a Committee of the Poplar Guardians with respect to the entries made in the vaccination registers for the Lady Day, 1902, quarter; and whether he will direct an investigation into the matter, or what action he proposes to take on the report.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) My attention has been called to the report referred to. The number of cases included in the registers for the quarter ended at Lady Day, 1902, amounted to upwards of 10,000, and I could not undertake to cause an investigation to be made into all these cases. One of the medical inspectors of my Department will, however, shortly visit the union for the purpose of making the ordinary inspection of the work of vaccination. He would in the usual course inquire generally into the action of the public vaccinators in making the entries in their registers, and I have directed that in the present case he shall make a special report to me on the subject.

Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists—Return of Promotions.

Mr. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the Return, issued in 1899, dealing with the promotions of sorting clerks and telegraphists in the provinces, can be brought up to the date of 31st December, 1902, for the purposes of comparison.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to my answer given to him to a similar Question, on the 11th December last.† The circumstances have not changed.

London and North Western Railway—Carriage Arrangements for Goods.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the fact that the London and North Western Railway Company accept goods carriage forward for delivery to consignees on their line of railway, and deliver the goods charging the amount of the railway carriage to the consignees, and, in the event of their failure to pay such carriage, take legal action to recover the railway carriage from the senders; and, if so, will he take measures to put a stop to such practices.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am not sure whether the suggestion of the hon. Member is that railway companies should be debarred from making the ordinary arrangements for the convenience of traders under which goods are accepted "carriage forward," or whether they should be prevented from invoking the assistance of the Courts in enforcing payment of debts. I am not in a position to take any action in either direction. If the legality of any condition upon which goods are accepted for carriage by railway is questioned it is a matter which falls within the jurisdiction of the Courts of Law.

Coal Duty—Incorrect Declarations.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has formed any estimate of the amount of loss to the revenue through coal of a higher value than 6s. per ton being declared upon export to be of a value not exceeding that sum; if he can state at which ports the practice of avoiding payment of the duty is most common; and whether he proposes to make any inquiries into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) If there be any loss to the revenue from the cause mentioned by the hon. Member I cannot form any estimate of it. The Customs authorities take every precaution they can to guard against infringement of the law, and I doubt if further special inquiries would be of any use.

Pensions for Widows of Seamen Killed on Service in Time of Peace.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he can give any intimation of his intention of dealing with the case of widows of seamen and marines who lose their lives on service in time of peace.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I am in communication with the Admiralty on the subject.

Corn Tax—Yield for Year 1902-3.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the yield of the shilling registration fee on foreign corn, meal, and flour entering the United Kingdom in the last fiscal year; and, if the remission of the duty proposed in the Budget extends to flour, or only applies to the raw material for the manufacture of flour.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The duty imposed on imported grain, flour, etc., by The Finance Act, 1902, yielded £2,346,796 during the financial year 1902–3. The remission of duty recently proposed applies to all goods named in the First Schedule to the Act quoted.

Ireland—Pollution of the River Bann

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several of the tributaries of the River Bann for salmon and trout, including the Sixmilewater and the Maine and its tributaries (particularly the Kells), are being so polluted by the discharge of dye stuffs and chemical matter from various mills as to endanger the existence of fish life in these waters; whether the attention of the fishery authorities in Ireland has been called to the effect of the practice of abstracting water from these rivers; and whether, in view of the effect upon fishermen along the banks of Lough Neagh of these proceedings, and of the fact that since 1885 the fisheries of the Coleraine district have decreased by over 50 per cent., he will give directions for an investigation into these matters.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 906.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. Under Section 80 of 5 and 6 Vic., c. 106, it is illegal to cause to flow into a river or lake any dye-stuff or other matter that may be poisonous to fish. It is the duty of the Local Boards of Conservators to enforce the law in this respect. It is not within the power of the Department of Agriculture to take any steps with a view to preventing the abstraction of water from the rivers mentioned.

Recovery of Instalments of Annuities under the Purchase Act.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now able to state the total number of cases in which proceedings have been instituted, by civil bill or otherwise, for the recovery of instalments of annuities due under the Purchase Acts, 1885–88 and 1891–96.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A Return showing the number of cases referred for legal proceedings for the recovery of instalments due under the Land Purchase Acts, 1885–88, and 1891–96.

I.—Acts of 1885–88.

Number of Payers.	Number in Arrear.	Gale Day Due.
22,264	1,110	1st November, 1893
23,432	1,460	1st May, 1894
24,324	1,355	1st November, 1894
24,751	1,945	1st May, 1895
24,862	1,250	1st November, 1895
24,891	1,606	1st May, 1896
24,900	1,579	1st November, 1896
24,910	1,370	1st May, 1897
24,930	1,490	1st November, 1897
25,000	1,898	1st May, 1898
25,000	1,997	1st November, 1898
25,280	1,785	1st May, 1899
do.	1,875	1st November, 1899
do.	1,710	1st May, 1900
do.	1,604	1st November, 1900
do.	1,673	1st May, 1901
do.	1,720	1st November, 1901
do.	1,663	1st May, 1902
do.	1,320	1st November, 1902

II.—Acts of 1891–96.

Number of Payers.	Number in Arrear.	Gale Day Due.
3,065	29	1st November, 1894
4,270	51	1st May, 1895
5,202	65	1st November, 1895
6,043	104	1st May, 1896
7,005	110	1st November, 1896
7,665	150	1st May, 1897
9,644	190	1st November, 1897
11,729	341	1st May, 1898
14,374	406	1st November, 1898
17,606	391	1st May, 1899
19,725	420	1st November, 1899
22,229	553	1st May, 1900
25,229	449	1st November, 1900
30,042	674	1st May, 1901
34,683	798	1st November, 1901
37,442	941	1st May, 1902
40,601	754	1st November, 1902

There are no materials available in the office of the Land Commission which would enable the information in this Return to be given for the period antecedent to 1st November, 1893.

Limitations of Army Order No. 9.

MR. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, Richmond): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will explain why the Army Order No. 9, of January, 1903, was limited to troops engaged in the operations previous to 3rd March, 1893; and whether he will extend the date so as to include the Sima Relief Column, under Captain Davis, D.S.O., Devonshire Regiment, which started from Bhamo in April, 1893, and which was the last expedition that season.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This Army Order was drawn up in accordance with the recommendations of the Indian Government, and I think we must adhere to their proposals.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Condemned Soldiers at Pretoria.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government will recommend that the clemency of the Crown be exercised in the case of the five men of the Leinster regiment under sentence of death at Pretoria.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Governor, in whom is vested the prerogative of mercy, has, I understand, commuted four of the sentences. In the fifth case he will allow the death sentence to be carried out; that is in the case of the man who fired the fatal shot.

Sierra Leone—Armament of Coaling Station.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can inform the House what progress has been made with the armament of the coaling station of Sierra Leone; whether he will state how many of the three heavy guns lately sent out are available for practice; and whether the garrison for practising with and manning these guns is on the spot.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The whole of the new fixed armaments approved for Sierra Leone have been issued to the station, but the mounting of two of the guns awaits the completion of a work which will be finished early next year. A West Indian Artillery Company is now being raised to complete the artillery *personnel* of the garrison.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE asked whether two of the guns were not dropped into the sea.

Lord STANLEY: I do not know that they were.

30th Pembroke Yeomanry and the War Medal.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the 30th Pembroke Yeomanry have not yet received the South African War medal; and whether, in view of the fact that many of the Yeomanry have already received their medals, he will arrange that there shall be no further delay in the issue of the medals to the Pembroke men.

Lord STANLEY: The medal roll now forwarded by this company, after two applications from the War Office, is so incomplete that fresh rolls will have to be prepared. It must be remembered that the checking of the rolls and the subsequent engraving of the individual medals require considerable time, and further, that the rolls must be taken in their proper turn. All possible expedition is being used in the issue of medals.

Cost of Somaliland Expedition.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what has been the expenditure upon the Somaliland expedition up to the present time; and what is the estimate for the further operations.

Lord STANLEY: The estimated expenditure up to the 31st March last is £250,000; and a further £250,000 is taken in Army Estimates 1903–4.

Army Guild of the Holy Standard.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) had the following Question on the Paper: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the position which the Army Guild of the Holy Standard occupies in relation to the Army and the War Office; whether it participates in any way in votes of public money or has the use of Government buildings; and whether the holding of any official position in this guild by the Chaplain General to the Forces has been recently the subject of Army Regulation. On being called on to put it, the hon. Member said that as he understood the guild had withdrawn the proposed Requiem Mass at St Paul's which brought it into some notoriety, he would not put the noble Lord to the inconvenience of answering the question.

Lord STANLEY: Oh, it's no inconvenience. It is as well that the House should know the facts. The Army Guild is a voluntary association of Church of England communicants in the Army. The reply to the other Questions raised is in the negative.

Army Corps Returns.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return respecting the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps which appears on to-day's Notice Paper.

Appended is the Return referred to:

Army (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps,—Address for Return showing the composition and effective strength of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps upon any particular day in April, 1903, in the following form:—

1st Army Corps.

	Unit.	Number of effective soldiers with the Colours, excluding recruits under 6 months' service, sick, deserters, and prisoners.	Nominal peace establishment.	Horses.	
				Strength.	Establishment.
1st Cavalry Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
Artillery (by Batteries):					
Horse	....				
	....				
	....				
Field	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Infantry:					
First Division:					
1st Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
2nd Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Second Division:					
3rd Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
4th Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Third Division:					
5th Brigade .	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
6th Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				

And similarly for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps.

Lord STANLEY: The Return which I promised the House last month will shortly be laid upon the Table, and will include information as regards the 4th Army Corps as well as the other three Army Corps.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Do I understand that the Return will be granted in the form in which I have put it down on the Paper?

Lord STANLEY: No, I cannot say it will be in that exact form. My right hon. friend made a statement as to the Return he would give.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Is the noble Lord aware that the Secretary of State for War definitely and specifically promised this actual Return between the 15th April and 30th May?

Lord STANLEY: I am certain that my right hon. friend will give whatever he promised.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) was understood to ask if it would be long delayed.

Lord STANLEY: No it will be given as quickly as possible.

The Service Bullet.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office a question of which I have given him private notice, viz., whether complaints have been received from the General Officer Commanding in Somaliland to the effect that the British force was placed at a disadvantage by the lack of stopping power of the service bullet, and whether he will consider the advisability of supplying the Somaliland Field Force as soon as possible with ammunition more suitable to the conditions of savage warfare.

Lord STANLEY: No complaints have been received from the General Officer Commanding in Somaliland as to the stopping power of the service bullet, except the reference in the telegram received yesterday. My hon. friend will have observed that it can be claimed for the existing ammunition that a force about 200 strong inflicted a loss of 2,000 on the enemy, and we should require clear evidence of the inefficacy of the existing bullet before taking the step indicated. We have cabled for further information.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: Then is it suggested that the complaint, which is undoubtedly printed in General Manning's despatch, is not well founded or requires further explanation?

Lord STANLEY: I would not like to say that, but it would be rather a big order to commence exchanging the whole of the ammunition we have out there.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I am sorry to say I must press this question. Does not the noble Lord consider that the lives of British officers and men are also a large order?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member cannot argue the matter by interrogations.

Transport of Military Stores to South Africa.

Mr. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how many tons of goods have been shipped this year by his Department to South Africa by steamers not belonging to the shipping ring as a result of representations received from the Board of Trade, and at what rate per ton.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): As the Admiralty has conducted the bulk of the transport work on behalf of the War Office, I have been asked by my right hon. friend to answer this Question. No goods have been shipped to South Africa by the Admiralty on behalf of the War Office or of the Navy during the current year by steamers not belonging to the Conference Lines.

All-Indian Memorial to Queen Victoria.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for India if he can state the amount received up to date in respect of the All-Indian Memorial for the construction of a white marble building on the eastern side of India, on or near the banks of the Hughli; and whether, in case the Calcutta site is not finally decided upon, he will consider the advisability of placing the monumental building near Delhi or Agra, where Indian marbles can be readily obtained, thereby avoiding the excessive cost of importing that material from Europe; and will he state what proportions of this fund have been contributed by princes and chiefs who are under the supervision of the Governor-General's agents or other officers of the Political Department, by Zemindars or othe privileged or wealthy classes, and by the general public respectively; and whether, in view of the circumstances of India, some appreciable portion of this All-India fund can be applied to productive, remedial, or beneficial purposes.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): According to the last report received, the total subscriptions up to 20th March last to the Queen Victoria Memorial Fund were Rs. 48,19,861, of which Rs. 18,26,845 were still outstanding. I understand that the Calcutta site has been finally decided upon. The Secretary of State has no information as to the proportions contributed to the Fund by the different classes mentioned in the Question. The fund is not at the disposal of the Government; the purpose to which it is to be applied has been determined by the subscribers.

Somaliland Military Expenditure before 1898.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what was the amount of money expended from all sources on military expeditions in Somaliland and Jubaland prior to 1898.

EARL PERCY: Prior to 1898 there were no disturbances necessitating expeditions in Jubaland, but in Somaliland certain expeditions occurred from time to time, of which the two more important were against the Aysa in 1889, and against the Aida Gallah in 1893. The cost of these expeditions is not separately shown in the accounts of the Protectorate or of the Government of India, but as the forces employed consisted exclusively of troops and police on the spot, the charge thus incurred was inconsiderable.

Indian Technical and Industrial Schools.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will consent to give the Return on Technical and Industrial Schools in India, mentioned on the Notice Paper this day.

Appended is the Return referred to:—

East India (Technical and Industrial Schools)—Address for Return giving the number of Government technical and industrial schools and classes in India; number of private technical schools and classes; the towns or places where they are situated; the number of students attending the same; the amount of expenditure per year on the Government schools; and the proportion which such amount bears to the aggregate educational grant for the year.

EARL PERCY: The Government of India are now considering the Report of the Committee appointed last year to inquire into Industrial and Technical Education in India, and I expect shortly to receive copies. As the Report will contain the information desired by the hon. Member, it seems hardly necessary to ask the Government of India to prepare separately the statistics referred to in the Address.

Concessions in East Africa.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will agree to give the Return respecting East Africa, etc. (Concessions), notice for which stands on to-day's Paper.

Appended is the Return referred to:—

East Africa, etc. (Concessions)—Address for Return showing the names of the firms or individuals to whom Concessions have been granted in East Africa and Uganda; the exact nature and terms of those Concessions; the prices paid for the same; and the exact localities and areas of their operation.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): A Return of the concessions granted by His Majesty's Government in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates is being prepared and will shortly be laid, together with some of the details for which my hon. friend asks. If he should require anything further perhaps he will communicate with me.

Macedonian Reforms.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is able to communicate any further information with respect to the steps taken to secure the execution of the joint scheme of reforms in the Macedonian vilayets, with special reference to the provision relating to the establishment of a gendarmerie under European officers.

LORD CRANBORNE: A fresh and earnest representation urging the sincere execution of the promised reforms has, within the last few days, been made by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Ambassadors, and has been supported by the representatives of other Powers. The early appointment of European officers to re-organise the gendarmerie has been repeatedly urged on the Ports by His Majesty's Ambassador as of special importance. He has reported that some Swedish instructors have been engaged, but nothing further of a definite character has reached us.

Venezuelan Dispute.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what arrangements have been come to with the Government of Venezuela as to the order in which the claims of the various nations are to be considered by The Hague Arbitration Tribunal; and whether the Venezuelan Government refuses to pay any portion of the war expenses of those nations who lately participated in the blockade of the Venezuelan coast; and, if so, what do those expenses amount to as far as regards the United Kingdom.

LORD CRANBORNE: The claims of the various nations against Venezuela will not be considered by the Tribunal of Arbitration at The Hague, but by mixed Commissions which will meet at Caracas. The provisions respecting the Commission which is to examine the British claims are contained in Articles III. and IV. of the Protocol signed on 13th February, 1903. As explained in reply to a question on the 21st instant,† negotiations are still proceeding with regard to the terms of the reference to The Hague under Article V. of the Protocol, and no statement can yet be made with regard to the points mentioned in the latter part of the hon. Member's Question.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Do I understand from the noble Lord that the terms of the reference to The Hague Tribunal have not yet been settled?

LORD CRANBORNE: Yes, that is so.

Preferential Railway Rates — Inter-Departmental Communications.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he has yet ascertained whether any and, if so, what representations have been made by the Board of Agriculture to the Board of Trade on the subject of preferential railway rates; and, if such communications have been made, whether he intends to make any representations to the railway companies concerned on the subject.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Since I replied to a question on the subject of preferential railway rates for agricultural produce put to me on the 3rd June last, ‡ by the hon. Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire, I find that the Board of Trade received a letter from the Board of Agriculture dated June 18th, dealing with such rates, and asking for certain information principally upon points of law. The Board of Trade replied on the 25th of the same month giving the information desired. I have not received from the Board of Agriculture any instances of alleged preferential rates given to imported traffic which could be used for the purposes of such an inquiry as that desired by the hon. Member for the Spalding Division, or in regard to which the Board of Trade have been asked to exercise their powers under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888. I may perhaps take this opportunity of explaining that the apparent difference between the statements made last Wednesday in the debate on the Board of Trade Vote, by myself and my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture, whose illness we all so much regret, really arose out of a misunderstanding. I had in my mind the reference by the Board of Agriculture to the Board of Trade of complaints by traders on which the Board of Agriculture desired us to take action under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act. There have been no such cases. But, on the other hand, my right hon. friend was correct in saying that a certain number of complaints of excessive rates, as distinct from preferential rates, have been forwarded by him to the Board, with a view to obtaining information. This information was supplied in every case by the Board of Trade, and, in some instances, after communication with the railway companies. The Board have not been asked to take any further action.

---

† See page 8.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cvii., 1278.

Trade Disputes—Board of Trade Intervention.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid Norfolk, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state in how many trade disputes, and in what instances the Board of Trade has appointed a conciliator or an arbitrator under the Act of 1896.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Under the Conciliation Act, 1896, the Board of Trade have appointed arbitrators in sixty-six cases, and conciliators in fifteen cases. Particulars of the cases are given in the Reports by the Board of Trade of their proceedings under the Act, and in the *Labour Gazette.*

Settle Limestone Quarry Lock-Out.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Settle Limestone Quarry Company, Limited, have locked out their workmen, and refuse to re-engage them unless they sign an agreement to give up membership in a trade union; and whether he will state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware of the dispute at the quarries of the Craven Lime Company at Settle. Information with regard to the dispute has been furnished by both sides, and I am now expecting certain further particulars.

Wantage Motor Car Fatality.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board if any inquiry has been held in reference to the recent motor car accident at Eton; and if any steps will be taken to prevent a repetition of the same.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I presume the hon. Member alludes to an accident near Wantage on Saturday week when a collision occurred between a motor cycle ridden by a boy and a motor car. The boy, I deeply regret to learn, died as a result of the accident. I understand that at the inquest the jury returned a verdict of "accidental death," and exonerated from blame the driver of the motor car, which was stated to be going at not more than four miles an hour at the time of the occurrence. I am not aware that any inquiry other than that by the Coroner has been held in this case. The matter does not seem to me to call for any action on my part.

Treatment of Casual Paupers.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the result obtained at the Manchester and Salford Mission Casual Ward and Labour Yard by allowing casuals to work in the afternoon in the yard and earn supper, bed, and breakfast, and to be discharged early next morning, so as to be in time to apply for work outside, which is given only early in the morning; and, if so, whether he will make inquiries and see if the same system can be introduced into some of the Union workhouses, seeing that men refuse to enter Government casual wards because they would be detained next morning at the hours when work may be had.

MR. WALTER LONG: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the Local Government Board have always impressed upon Boards of Guardians the importance of allowing casual paupers to be discharged at an early hour in the morning, and an order issued by them in 1892 provides that a casual pauper, who has been detained for more than one night, and has represented that he is desirous of seeking work, shall be allowed to discharge himself at 5.30 a.m. in summer, and 6.30 a.m. in winter, provided that to the best of his ability he has performed the prescribed task of work. I may explain that, in ordinary circumstances, a casual pauper cannot take his discharge before the morning of the second day after his admission. In exceptional cases the Guardians can relax this restriction; and it is quite competent for them in such cases to permit the discharge to take place at an early hour in the morning.

County Medical Officers.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state what County Councils in England and Wales have appointed medical officers; and will he specify those cases in which such medical officer gives his whole time to the duties of the office.

MR. WALTER LONG: Twenty-six County Councils have appointed a medical officer of health. In all of these cases the officer gives his whole time to the duties of his office. I shall be happy to furnish the hon. Member with a list of these cases.

Regulation of Motor Car Traffic.

GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that an omnibus driver was summoned and convicted, and sentenced on the 17th instant to a month's imprisonment with hard labour, for driving at a speed of ten miles an hour in the streets; and whether he will instruct the police to take similar proceedings against the drivers of motor cars who may drive vehicles at the same speed.

THE UNDER SECRETARY TO THE HOME OFFICE (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.): The driver referred to in the Question was convicted under the enactment in the London Hackney Carriage Act of 1843, which renders the driver of a stage carriage liable to punishment for "wanton or furious driving." There is a similar enactment in the Light Locomotives Order 1896, with regard to motor cars; and the police have instructions to take action against any motor cars, as against other vehicles, which may be driven to the common danger, whether the speed be greater or less than ten miles an hour.

GENERAL LAURIE: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether, as a matter of fact, the police carry out their instructions with reference to motor cars?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare E.): Will the hon. Gentleman ask the Prime Minister if he will set a good example in this matter?

No reply was given.

Weymouth Licensing Sessions.

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Mayor and justices of Weymouth, at the adjourned licensing sessions on the 10th March last, imposed as a condition of renewal of a licence that women or children should not be allowed to go to a public house where there is a slate club for the purpose of making payments; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

Mr. COCHRANE: Enquiries have been made in this matter and it appears that the licensing justices, having ascertained that in some cases young female servants and other women had to go at night to public houses to pay their subscriptions to slate clubs held therein, requested the Mayor to intimate to the licence-holders present at the licensing meeting that this practice was undesirable and might in certain circumstances lead to the licences being cancelled. The newspaper report of the announcement made by the Mayor goes beyond this intimation, but the Secretary of State has no power to interfere in the matter.

Carrying Agents and the London County Council Vehicular By-Law.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the proposed by-law for the good rule and government of the County of London, issued by the London County Council and awaiting his sanction, in relation to vehicles; and, having regard to the fact that the owners of vehicles have declared that they are unable to define to what class of vehicles the by-law will apply and how it should be carried out, can he give this information; and, if not, will he receive a deputation from those interested.

Mr. COCHRANE: Representations have been received from some of the railway companies and from the leading carrying agents objecting to the proposed by-law, and they are being referred to the London County Council for their consideration. It is being pointed out to the Council that it is essential that any by-law of this nature should leave no room for doubt as to the vehicles to which it would apply, and that its requirements should be practicable. Full time will be given for the consideration of these and all other points connected with the by-law before it is allowed to come into force. The railway companies have suggested a conference on the subject between the parties interested, and this seems to be a good suggestion; but at present, at all events, there appears to be no need for a deputation to the Home Department.

Schemes under the Education Act.

Mr. LLOYD WHARTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is a fact that town and county councils, by postponing the taking up of their duties under the Education Act, 1902, are forfeiting considerable sums of money which are now lying at their disposal in the Exchequer; and, if so, whether he will state the amount thus lost to the County of Durham by the proposal of the County Council to defer the operation of the Act until April, 1904.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION Sir William Anson, (Oxford University): In reply to my right hon. friend I have to say that the matter stands as he has stated; and that in the case of the County of Durham, the County Council, had they adopted the Act on the day named therein, would have been entitled to draw the sum of some £3,800 a month. Of this sum, some £1,500 per month is now going to the voluntary schools in the County and to a few of the School Boards under the Acts of 1897. Consequently the county ratepayers are suffering a nett loss of nearly £2,300 a month from the Exchequer for every month that the operation of Part III. of the Act is delayed.

Greenock School Board Election.

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, whether he is aware that at the School Board election in Greenock, on 2nd April, a duly authorised personation agent was refused admission to the Fourth Ward polling place in Shaw Street Public School by a policeman, who acted on the instructions of the Chief Constable; and whether, seeing that the refusal to admit was persisted in till the Returning Officer was found, he will state what steps he proposes to take in reference to this action of the Chief Constable.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire): The hon. Member's information is not quite accurate. The gentleman in question having recorded his vote and left the polling station requested to be readmitted. The constables on duty did not know him to be an authorised agent, and he did not show the card which every such agent receives from the Returning Officer, and accordingly he was refused admission. He returned shortly after and produced the ticket and was thereupon admitted. Had he produced the ticket in the first instance there would have been no difficulty in his obtaining admission. In the circumstances I see no reason for taking any steps in the matter.

Irish Land Bill.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the frequent references to sections of other statutes which are incorporated in the Irish Land Bill, whose provisions must be construed and interpreted in connection with the portions of other statutes which are thus by way of reference incorporated in the Bill, the various sections to which reference is thus made will be printed and circulated in a Parliamentary Paper for the convenience of Members, and with a view of rendering the provisions and purport of the Bill more intelligible, and of facilitating the study of the measure, and of lessening the danger of future judicial interpretations of its provisions not contemplated by the Legislature.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Yes sir; this will be done.

Irish Civil Expenditure.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the intention of the Government to cut off £250,000 a year from the present Treasury expenditure upon the civil establishment of Ireland, provision will be made that the saving so effected shall, in accordance with the precedent in the provisions of the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act of 1897, when coming from money payable out of the Consolidated Fund continue to be paid out of that fund, and when coming from money provided by Parliament through the several Estimates shall continue to be paid out of money so provided, and shall in either case be carried by the Treasury to a separate account, to be applied to such Irish purposes as Parliament may from time to time direct.

MR. ATKINSON: This matter was fully explained by my right hon. friend when introducing the Land Bill on the 25th March. He then stated that the charge proposed to be placed in any one year upon the Estimates in respect to the Land Purchase Aid Fund would not exceed £390,000, and that a portion of this charge would be recouped by economies in civil expenditure amounting to the sum mentioned in the Question. The answer is, therefore, in the negative.

Irish Constabulary at Railway Stations.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the desirability of discontinuing the daily attendance of police constables at the various Irish railway stations.

MR. ATKINSON: The regulations issued to the police prohibit their attendance at railway stations unless specially ordered to be present by reason of the importance of the station, or some emergency necessitating their attendance.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What duties do they perform at the stations?

MR. ATKINSON: They prevent breaches of the peace, and watch for criminals.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: And look after political offenders.

Magherafelt Disturbances.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that a detachment of the Royal Irish Constabulary stationed at Magherafelt on the 13th instant made, in the absence of their officer, a baton charge on a number of bandsmen; and whether, in view of the personal injury inflicted, he will order a sworn inquiry to be made.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, may I ask whether the police were not forced to draw their swords in self protection, that one policeman was actually shot with a revolver, and that the whole row was caused by an Orange mob.

MR. ATKINSON: Proceedings have been instituted by the Crown against a number of persons for participating in the disturbances on this occasion. The action of the police will no doubt be fully investigated by the magistrates on the hearing of these cases; but in any case the question whether further investigation in the direction suggested is called for must await the result of the pending proceedings. As regards the supplemental question it would be most improper to answer such an inquiry whilst legal proceedings are pending.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was not asking the right hon. Gentleman for an expression of opinion but was only putting to him a question of fact—namely, whether the police were not forced to draw their swords in self-defence.

*MR. SPEAKER: That question has been already dealt with by the answer.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No, sir!

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) asked whether, in view of the fact that only one summons had been issued, he would give directions for the furnishing of the names of all the policemen who charged the public, with a view to further proceedings being taken.

MR. ATKINSON: To do that would be to give an opinion on the legal proceedings now pending. When they have terminated the hon. Member may put another Question on the subject.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: As a matter of simple fact, was not a revolver fired on the police on this occasion?

MR. ATKINSON: That is one of the matters in controversy.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Is it in controversy that a policeman was actually shot?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Member has been fully answered and Members must not argue it.

Education Capitation Grant in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that national teachers whose annual examination happened to be in January, February, or March, 1901, were only paid a capitation grant of 4s. per head on the average attendance for the year ending 31st December, 1900, whereas the capitation grants since the passing of the Act amounted to 5s. per head on other years; and, if so, will the balance be paid to these teachers.

MR. ATKINSON: I am informed by the Commissioners that all teachers examined on the dates mentioned were paid a capitation rate of 5s. per head on the average attendance for the year 1900.

Education Result Fees in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the equivalent for result fees for the financial year 1900 and 1901 paid to teachers was in some cases less than the average for the last few years; and whether he will take steps to secure that the balance will be paid.

MR. ATKINSON: The equivalent grant in lieu of results fees for the year mentioned was based on actual earnings from the latter source during the three preceding years. In no case, I am assured, was the grant less than the teacher's average earnings thus ascertained.

Kiladysert Police Inspector and the Press.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the petty sessions court in Kiladysert, Mr. Clancy, a reporter, was removed from court by orders of District Inspector Patrick; and, if so, will he state for what reason and under what authority the police exercised this power.

Mr. ATKINSON: The reporter was not removed from the court. But, after the business of petty sessions had concluded and the general public had left the court, the agent and some of the tenants of an adjoining estate remained in order to perfect before one of the justices some statutory declarations verifying their purchase agreements. This was entirely a private matter, and the district inspector requested the reporter to leave. It would have been more prudent for the officer to have allowed the justice present to require the reporter to leave, but he acted from the best motives and, at most, was guilty of an error of judgment.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND suggested that the police should be instructed not to act thus in the future without directions from the magistrates.

Galway Harbour.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what action has been taken with respect to the application by the Galway Harbour Commissioners for the loan of a dredger for the purpose of effecting improvements in the harbour.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Harbour Commissioners were negotiating some months ago for the hire of a dredger from a Scotch Harbour Authority, but with what result I cannot say. The Board of Public Works have, at present, no dredger which could be placed at the disposal of the Commissioners on loan or hire. The question, however, of providing a dredger in connection with the Marine Works Act is now under consideration. If such an arrangement be found practicable the dredger could be utilised by Harbour Authorities in Ireland on terms that might hereafter be settled.

DublinMotor Car Fatality.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he will inform the House upon what grounds the proceedings against the Marquess of Downshire, for so driving his motor car as to cause the death of a woman, were withdrawn in the Dublin Police Court.

Mr. ATKINSON: The charge was withdrawn because there was not, either in the evidence given before the Coroner's Jury, by whom the accused was completely exonerated from blame, or in that in the possession of the Crown, any proof that the accused had been guilty of any negligence whatever. The solicitor who appeared for the next of kin stated in court that he was convinced the homicide was accidental, and the Police Magistrate approved of the course which was taken.

Protection of Seamen at Limerick.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the desirability of appointing a Board of Trade official at Limerick to look after and protect seamen arriving at and being paid off at that port.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There are, already two officers at Limerick who hold appointments under the Board of Trade as superintendent and deputy-superintendent respectively and whose duty it is to attend to the interests of seamen who are paid off there. As only nine vessels discharged their crews at Limerick last year it does not appear to be necessary to appoint an additional officer.

Belfast Sorting Clerks' Grievances.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain the cause of the delay in granting increases of wages to two sorting clerks and telegraphists at Belfast from 12s. to 18s. per week, due in September and October last, respectively.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): I am informed that the delay was due to inadvertence. The increases of wages due in the months mentioned were sanctioned on the 21st instant and all arrears have now been paid. In any case the people aggrieved should memorialise their superior officer, and if they do not get redress they should then memorialise me. There is no need for them to trouble hon. Members.

MR. SLOAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the local postmaster has been communicated with and has ignored the question for six months?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If so, that is all the more reason why the members of the staff should memorialise me.

Rock Angus Lighthouse.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Irish Lights Commissioners intend taking any steps to repair the damage caused by recent storms to the lighthouse on Rock Angus; and whether they have further considered the necessity for having a light placed in the lighthouse.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Irish Lights Commissioners inform the Board that the expediency of placing a light on this beacon has not been further considered since I replied to a Question by the hon. Member on the 4th December last,† but the statutory sanction of the Board to the acceptance of a tender for the repair of the beacon has been given by the Department.

Cost of Royal Commissions and Select Committees.

MR. MALCOLM: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will grant a Return showing the annual cost to the country of Royal Commissions and Select Committees respectively appointed since the year 1892.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am having inquiries made with a view to seeing how far it is possible to meet the desire of the hon. Member, but he will understand that the investigation will entail researches which must occupy no inconsiderable time.

Baghdad—Constantinople Railway Scheme.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any reports have been received from the Indian Government in reference to the projected Baghdad Constantinople Railway; and, if so, whether he will lay them upon the Table.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer is in the negative.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he proposes to make further progress with the financial business, and what Supply will be taken on Thursday. May I add that there is a feeling—not I think an unreasonable one—that it would be very desirable to put down the Foreign Office Vote for that day, to elicit some explanation of the position of affairs in Somaliland. When that point has been discussed the Vote can be withdrawn and renewed at a later period of the session.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked whether the Foreign Office had not handed over temporarily the control of the war operations in Somaliland to the War Office.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The desire of the House to have some discussion on events in Somaliland is a very natural and proper one. I was only informed of it when I came down to the House to-day and I have not yet had time to decide which Vote will give the House the amplest opportunity for such a discussion. There is in the Foreign Office Vote a sum for the civil administration of Somaliland, and, I believe, also a sum for the ordinary military operations, but it is true that the conduct of the actual military operations, and the expenditure in connection with them, is in charge of the War Office, and not the Foreign Office. I will endeavour to put down a Vote in the form most convenient to the House, and perhaps the Post Office Vote may be put down as the second Vote. With regard to financial business, I hope there will be no difficulty in taking the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill on Monday next, and the Budget proposals can be continued afterwards. If there is any difficulty in proceeding with the Land Bill on Monday, I shall propose to take the Budget proposals on that day.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxv., 1331.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked on what date it was proposed to take the Resolutions relating to the Sugar Convention.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must not be taken to assent to the proposition implied in this Question that any Resolution will be required; but, in any case, we must get the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill before that matter is taken up, and also the Resolution connected with the Transvaal loan.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures — Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

SHIPOWNERS' NEGLIGENCE (REMEDIES) BILL.

"To enlarge the Remedies of Persons injured by the Negligence of Shipowners," presented by Mr. Harry Samuel; supported by Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Ernest Flower, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Major Evans-Gordon, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th of May, and to be printed. [Bill 166.]

VAGRANT CHILDREN BILL.

"To provide for the better protection of Vagrant Children," presented by Sir John Gorst; supported by Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Ernest Flower, and Mr. Lloyd-George; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 167.]

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

The Select Committee on National Expenditure was nominated of,—Mr. Churchill, Mr. Dillon, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Sir James Fergusson, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. Lough, Sir Lewis M'Iver, Sir Robert Mowbray, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Trevelyan, Sir Edgar Vincent, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

BETHESDA (INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE).

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): In submitting to the House the Motion which stands in my name—a Motion which asks the House to declare that it is the duty of the Executive to put into operation the law of the land—I think it is desirable at the outset to clear away some misconceptions which appear to have fastened upon it. I need not, of course, deal seriously with the suggestion that any general issue is raised by this Motion as between what is called Socialism and Individualism, or as between trade unionism and unorganised labour, or even as between labour and capital. I believe the course of the debate will show that there are not a few Members of this House, themselves large employers of labour, men who cannot be suspected of any hostility either to the principles or the methods of our existing industrial system, who feel just as strongly as the most advanced Socialist in the country, and feel as strongly in the interest of capital as in the interest of labour, that the prolongation of this irritating and wasteful struggle at Bethesda is a matter not merely of local, but of national concern. Nor, Sir, again, is the main or primary object of my Motion to raise a discussion upon the merits or the demerits of the two conflicting parties at all the various stages of their protracted controversy. I will say frankly for myself that I have never known an industrial dispute in which all the reason was on one side and all the unreason on the other; and this particular case, although I have a strong opinion as to where the balance lies, is no exception to the rule. I shall endeavour, as far as I can, to present the matter to the House, not as the advocate of either party, but simply and exclusively from the point of view of public and general interest. I am the more disposed to avoid any topic of unnecessary irritation because, while I am asking the House, as I think for sufficient reasons, to condemn the inaction of His Majesty's Government, I still maintain the hope that the result of this debate may be, not to retard, but to facilitate a settlement, which, whatever may be our view as to the merits of the parties or as to the attitude of the Government, we must all, without distinction of party, ardently desire. One further preliminary observation I have to make. It is this. This motion is not a demand for a change in the existing law. It is a complaint that the law has been allowed, through timidity or supineness, to become a dead letter. Until the Government have used or exhausted the powers which the law gives them, there is no question of any amendment of the law. But in order to avoid any possible misapprehension, I should like to say this, as far as I am concerned, that I am, as I have always been, strongly opposed to any attempt to establish in this country a system of compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes. I watch, as I suppose we all do, with much interest the experiments being made by our fellow-subjects at the Antipodes, in New Zealand and New South Wales, in that direction. I think it is too early yet to pronounce any final judgment as to the success or failure of that legislation in those countries. But here the circumstances are entirely different, and it is my own personal opinion that in our complex and ramified industrial system, carried on, as it is, under infinitely varying conditions of both district and of trade, inter-dependent in almost all its parts, any statute to compel reference of disputes to a judicial or expert tribunal would be accepted neither by masters nor by men. It would, in my judgment, be an instrument, not of peace, but of discord and confusion. The questions I wish to submit to the House are simpler and of a much more practical character. They are two in number. The first is, are the circumstances of this particular dispute so grave and so exceptional as to warrant, and not only to warrant but to demand, the exercise of any power of conciliation which the State may possess? and the second question is, are there powers which the Government might and ought to exercise which they have left and are leaving unused? If both these questions are answered in the affirmative my Motion is justified.

Now as regards the first question. I am not going for the moment into the particular issues of the controversy between Lord Penrhyn and his men, because I wish, if I can, first of all, very briefly, to try to get the House to realise the actual gravity of the situation from the public point of view. The great slate quarry at Bethesda is in many respects a unique undertaking. Through the co-operation of capital and labour during now several generations it has not only become a source of wealth to the owner, but it has provided means for the growth of what was a short time ago a prosperous and well-ordered community, full of religious and educational activities, and with some striking features of its own which gave it what I may perhaps call a social and corporate individuality of its own. As in the case of the employer, so in the case of the workpeople; father was succeeded by son, and son succeeded by grandson. The mountain adjoining the quarry was covered with houses, built to a large extent by the people themselves, which through long association they had come to look upon as their permanent, I might almost say their hereditary, homes. In every direction you saw the evidence, not so much as we see in many industries of a migratory crowd, which shifts its scene of occupation according to the higgling of the market, but of a permanent, organised community, rooted in the soil, attached to its work and to the surroundings of that work by the strongest possible ties; and isolated though it was from the rest of the world, by the very fact of that isolation more strongly bound together as a people among themselves. I do not think that is an over-coloured picture. Now, what is the situation to-day? I wish purposely to avoid the use of any embittering language; but what is the actual state of things? When the present dispute began in the autumn of 1900, nearly three years ago, some 2,800 men living in the community which I have described were at work in the quarry. On the 22nd of November, 1900, work was suspended and the quarry was closed. On the 11th June, 1901, that is to say some seven months later, the quarry was re-opened and, as far as I can make out, about 500 men, including perhaps —the numbers are not very clear—but including perhaps about 400 of those who had been previously employed there, went in. There have been further additions from time to time to the men at work in the re-opened quarry. As to the precise figures there is a good deal of conflict of testimony, and I do not profess to determine the number, but this at any rate is certain: that of the 2,800 men who were there three years ago only a small fraction have accepted the employer's terms, and the great bulk of them are either finding temporary employment in other parts of Wales,—not having severed, because they do not wish to sever till they are compelled to do so, the last tie which binds them to their old home—or are dependent on relief from the trades union or public charity. The production of the great quarry itself, enormously undermanned as it must be now, has necessarily dwindled. Poverty and privation are to be met with in every quarter of Bethesda. The children are ill-fed, the homes of which I have spoken are broken up, or are kept together with great difficulty and at an enormous sacrifice. The common life of the community in all its aspects and activities is arrested and disorganised. Worst of all, a spirit of bitterness and intolerance has been engendered between the men who are at work and the men who have ceased to work which divides old friends, splits up families, poisons the atmosphere of the place, and has led from time to time to acts of violence which cannot be too strongly condemned or too sternly punished; and which, as I believe, are condemned by the general opinion of the great mass of the men and of their responsible leaders. Violence and intimidation, direct or indirect, you can and you must repress, but is it not also your duty to do everything that you lawfully can to assuage, and if possible to extinguish, the sense of resentment and bitterness which is the inevitable outcome of the state of things such as I have described in its slow development?

Sir, I think I have said enough to show that this is not a mere ordinary and transient quarrel, one of those temporary failures of adjustment, as economists say, between supply and demand which can be trusted to right themselves. In the words of the Motion which I am submitting to the House there are "grave social and public interests involved." I am glad to say that for that proposition I can cite a very much higher authority —the authority of the very Department of the Government whose conduct in this matter I am about to impugn. In the autumn of the year 1896 there was a previous suspension of work at this quarry, and the men who went out on that occasion solicited then, as they have solicited now, the good offices of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade, better inspired then, I think, than it is now, assented to that solicitation, and they submitted to Lord Penrhyn, the employer, a proposal that there should be a meeting between himself and representatives of the men in the presence, if not under the chairmanship, of some representative of the Board of Trade. Lord Penrhyn refused that offer and in a letter which I think is worth quoting, dated 9th December, 1896, said the reason for his refusal was:—

> "I must with all due respect beg to decline to comply with such a suggestion, as my acceptance of it would establish a precedent for outside interference with the management of my private affairs."

[Ministerial Cheers.] That was Lord Penrhyn's view. Was it the view of the Board of Trade? No. What was the reply of the Board of Trade? I may quote their letter of the 12th December in the same year. The Board of Trade replied thus:—

> "With regard to the question of the presence of a Board of Trade representative at the

proposed conference between yourself and the men, I am to state that there is no desire to press the matter against your wishes, but I am to point out that in view of the provisions of the Conciliation Act the Board cannot admit that the settlement of a prolonged dispute affecting some thousands of men and their families can be rightly regarded as a matter of private interest only."

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): I beg pardon for interrupting the right hon. Gentleman, but would he read the letter in which Lord Penrhyn afterwards absolutely repudiated that interpretation?

*MR. ASQUITH: The hon. Gentleman will allow me to pursue my argument; he will find that I shall do no injustice to Lord Penrhyn at any stage of it. Lord Penrhyn, it is quite true though it is not in the least to the point, said he had been misinterpreted, and that when he deprecated interference with his private affairs he did not mean that they were private affairs at all. That is not the point. The point is whether the sentiment which was cheered a few moments ago by some hon. Gentlemen opposite, or whether the view of the Board of Trade, then presided over by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, that a dispute of this kind was or was not a matter of private concern was correct. And let me point out that when the right hon. Gentleman very creditably, as I think, directed that letter to be written the struggle had only lasted two months. It was in its very early stage. The condition of social dislocation and domestic privation which I have described had not arisen, or had hardly arisen at all; but at the very beginning, acting, I think, on a perfectly just conception of the duties of his Department and of the responsibility entrusted to him by Act of Parliament, the right hon. Gentleman said this was far too important and grave a thing to be treated as a mere matter of private concern, and that the Board of Trade were entitled to interfere.

That brings me to my second question. Are there powers in the hands of the Government, and of this particular Department, which they could exercise and which they ought to exercise in relation to a matter of this kind? I confess I am a little surprised, having been always myself and still being strongly adverse to any unnecessary intervention by the State in industrial affairs, to find myself described as a Socialist and revolutionary. Why? Because I ask the Government of the day to put in execution an Act of Parliament of which they are the authors, and for which, on many platforms, they have claimed the credit. I am referring, of course, to the Conciliation Act of 1896. What are the powers given by that Act? They fall into three categories dealing with the event of either the existence or the apprehension of industrial disputes between employers and employed. In the first place, the Board of Trade on their own initiative, without any request from anybody at all, in such an event may make an inquiry and may endeavour to bring about a meeting of the parties concerned. In the second place, at the request of either party to the dispute—not of both, but at the request of either party to the dispute—they may appoint a conciliator, whose business it is to inquire into all the circumstances and to endeavour to bring about a settlement; and, in the third place, on the application of both parties, and, of course, only of both parties, they may appoint an arbitrator. Now, is it not ridiculous to contend that under the provisions of an Act of Parliament like that the Board of Trade may not act, is almost bound to hold its hand, unless it gets some kind of intimation from both parties. The Act becomes a perfect dead letter if it could not do so, as was pointed out over and over again, in the debates on that Act It had been before Parliament for many years. We promoted a similar Bill when we were in office in '94, and it was pointed out over and over again in the protracted discussions which went on year after year, that in that proposed legislation there were two perfectly distinct propositions: arbitration at the instance and with the consent of both parties, and conciliation either at the initiative of the Board of Trade alone or on the application of either one or other of the parties to the dispute. Now, I have been asked what proposition by way of limitation I am prepared to lay down in relation to the carrying out of that Act. It is said—"Are you prepared to require the Board of Trade to interfere as conciliator, or even as investigator, in every trumpery and trivial dispute that arises between master and men?" Certainly not. There must be a *dignus vindice nodus*; there must be a case where the differences are not trivial, and not reasonably certain of prompt adjustment between the parties. But this proposition I lay down, and I do not shrink from its application in any case I can conceive of—that the true interpretation of the Act is that where the conflict covers a substantially wide area; where there seems to be little or no probability of an early adjustment of the dispute by negotiations between the parties; and particularly where more than mere private interests are involved and the struggle threatens social order and the well-being of a whole community; the Board of Trade has not only the power, but the duty to use the power, which the law has placed in its hands.

Let me here point out by way of anticipation of criticism or rejoinder that, in my judgment at all events, it is not a fit or apt criterion of whether or not the occasion for intervention has arisen that there is a certainty, or a strong probability, of success. You never can tell in advance in cases of this kind, whether you are likely to succeed or not. I speak with some little experience in this matter. In the years when we were in office, in 1893 and 1894, there was no Conciliation Act in existence. The Board of Trade, or any other department of the Government, had no *locus standi* in any industrial dispute; but at least on two occasions action was taken. The first was the great coal strike, which was settled through the intervention of my noble friend Lord Rosebery; and in the second case, the much smaller dispute of the cab strike in the Metropolis, I was able to contribute to its settlement. In both instances persons were brought together in the same room, with the conciliator sitting between them. In the, relatively speaking, small dispute of the cab strike, with which I was concerned, I can assure the House that when those persons came together in the room, and sat on opposite sides of the table, I was filled with despair, for rarely, if ever, did I see evidence of estrangement so complete, and a gap so unbridgeable between the maximum the one side was prepared to concede and the minimum of what the other side demanded. Yet what was the result? After a good deal of knocking of heads together—to use a popular expression—of palavering, of negotiation, and the exercise of such modest arts of conciliation and compromise as any person entrusted with such a commission, if he does not possess them before, will soon acquire, the dispute, which had raged furiously and seemed hopeless of appeasement, was settled, and we came to an arrangement which has now worked for nine years without a single hitch. But that is not our own experience alone. We have had a still more remarkable illustration in the United States. The President of the United States has absolutely no constitutional or legal right of any kind to intervene in labour disputes. But he brought together in the course of last year the parties to one of the most fierce and apparently implacable industrial conflicts that have ever raged in the United States, a *modus vivendi* was arrived at, and there is now the greatest possible prospect of ultimate peace. I mention these illustrations, drawn from actual experience, to show that the mere fact that it does not look likely that you will obtain the desired result ought not to deter you from making the attempt. Nor do I think that the fact that mediation by other bodies or private persons has been refused, or has proved ineffective, in the least degree absolves the Board of Trade from taking action itself. There are, obviously, the greatest possible differences between any kind of mediation by any private person, however well intentioned, able, tactful, or in the confidence of the parties, and the mediation of the Board of Trade. In the first place the Board of Trade goes there clothed with a statutory mandate—a mandate not, of course, from the parties, but a mandate given by Parliament with, as I humbly conceive, the intention that in a fit case it should be used. The Board of Trade goes there with a statutory authority which no private negotiator or conciliator could possibly possess. I observe that Lord Penrhyn rejected the offer of arbitration from the

County Council of Carnarvon on the ground that he would not allow any outside interference. I do not say whether he was wise or unwise, but he was perfectly entitled to take up that position towards the County Council of Carnarvon. But he is not entitled to take up that position as regards the Board of Trade. The President of the Board of Trade shakes his head. Surely Parliament has said to the Board of Trade, "In a case of this kind we authorise you to do this thing." And how can any lawabiding citizen say, "This is an unwarrantable interference with my private affairs?"

There is another point. The Board of Trade is free from the suspicion of any kind of partiality. It is not bound, if it does not think fit, to tender advice; but if, after a full investigation of the local circumstances, it has come to the conclusion that there ought to be "give" here and "take" there, I venture to say that it offers that advice with an authority to which no private negotiator can possibly pretend. In these circumstances the refusal of either side of the good offices of the Board of Trade involves a much more serious responsibility than the refusal of the good offices of any mere outsider. Industrial peace is not merely a private but a public necessity; and, where the interests of a large number of persons are involved, if either side in the dispute—I do not care which side it is—acts unreasonably or perversely in refusing the good offices which Parliament has authorised a public Department to offer, it risks, in a far greater degree and in a totally different sense than would be the case in private mediation, that moral support of public opinion which, in the long run, in these industrial struggles determines the side on which victory lies. So far as the men here are concerned there is, upon this point, no room for controversy. They have repeatedly asked for arbitration. They have suggested as arbitrators some of the most eminent statesmen on both sides of politics, including the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary. Lord Penrhyn has not seen his way to accept that proposal. He was perfectly entitled to reject it. But, finding that arbitration would not be accepted by the other party in the dispute, the men invited the Board of Trade to use its powers of conciliation or inquiry conferred on it by this Act. They sent that invitation in December last, and the answer was the refusal of the Board of Trade on the ground that it could not lead to any useful result.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Hear, hear!

*MR. ASQUITH: The right hon. Gentleman says "Hear, hear." I will not repeat what I said about the extraordinary difficulty, if not impossibility, of predicting what may happen in such cases. But I will refer again to the previous intervention of the Board of Trade, in 1896, at the instance of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is quite true that the intervention of the Board of Trade on that occasion was ineffective. That is to say, it did not bring about approximately and directly a settlement of the dispute. Yet I hold the opinion strongly that that intervention—partly by the public attention which it called to the case, partly by the debates in this House, and partly by the fact that, despite the absence of the representative of the Board of Trade, the representatives of the men and the employer did actually come together—was indirectly and largely responsible for the comparatively speedy settlement arrived at in August, 1896. That strike, or lock-out, lasted eleven months. The present strike has already lasted two years and a half. I quite agree with those who say that that instance of the intervention of the Board of Trade is not conclusive. I think, however, it is a hopeful indication of the possible value of similar action now. It seems strange that after very careful consideration of all the information I have been able to obtain I do not find it easy at this moment to say what is the real, as distinguished from the ostensible, issue between Lord Penrhyn and the men who were lately in his employment. There are a number of subsidiary matters—matters connected with the letting of contracts, the management of the sick club, and the evils of sweating—as to which there can be no doubt whatever what the issue is, and which, I believe, can be very easily settled by negotiation. But what is the real issue in this matter? As far as I can ascertain it hangs upon or hovers around two main points. The first is the question of combination, and the second is the relation, when the quarries are re-opened, of the old workmen to the new.

As to the question of combination, let me remind the House of how the present state of things has been arrived at. There was, between 1874 and 1885, a committee of the men established by agreement between them and the agent of their then employer, the late Lord Penrhyn. That committee, apparently, was the regular vehicle and medium of communication on all matters of general grievance between the body of the workmen and their employer. When the present Lord Penrhyn succeeded to the management of the property he abolished the committee in 1885, and the fact that that committee had in some way or other been revived, or at any rate reclothed with some of its old functions, was, I think, one of the main causes which led to the strike or lock-out of 1896. If I remember right Lord Penrhyn dismissed several of the members of the committee at that time, and that was the reason why the men went out. There were two rival contentions in regard to that committee. The men's view was that the committee was merely as I have described it, a convenient medium for the sifting of grievances—with the result that numbers of petty trifling complaints the management were never troubled with at all. Lord Penrhyn's contention, on the other hand, was that the committee, whatever its ostensible objects and functions, was really a body which enabled the men to interfere with the management of the quarries. I do not want to go into that point, because I do not want, if I can help it, to revive buried animosities. That is the history of the difficulty. Those are the conventions which prevailed on one side and the other. What is the state of things now? I do not care what happened in 1874, 1885, or 1896. Over and over again the men have disclaimed their intention that any committee or organisation of any kind should have the right to interfere with the internal management of Lord Penrhyn's affairs. I do not consider in respect of this I can do better than to read the communication of the 27th September last year, in which the chairman of the men, Mr. Henry Jones, in reply to Lord Penrhyn says—

> "All they desire is that the men shall have the right to represent their grievances by means of a freely appointed deputation; that they have no wish to interfere with the management of the quarry."

On the other hand, Lord Penrhyn has over and over again said he does not dispute the men's right of combination. I do not know what Lord Penrhyn means by combination. The rights of combination are not exhausted when you have allowed the men to hold a debating society or a club. Combination, if it is to be what we generally understand by the term, must, to be effective, at least afford the means, by some form of corporate action or delegation, of submitting any grievance the men may have to their employer on behalf of the body of men employed. I see in this House, on both sides, not a few great employers of labour in this country, and I think I might put to any one of them this question: If he were employing 2,000 or 3,000 men working under the conditions under which these men were working, men to a large extent not speaking the language which he speaks, would he regard it as any interference with the natural rights and prerogatives of capital, or as inconsistent with the due conduct of his business, that these men should from time to time have the power, through a Committee, through some form of delegation or deputation, of expressing and communicating any grievance of their fellows to the employer or his representative? I go further. I do not believe it is possible in these days, under modern conditions, to carry on a business of this kind unless you have something more than the mere physical conjunction—unless you have the intelligent co operation of labour and capital; and I believe the wisest and most farsighted employers of labour are those who welcome in every possible way such co-operation on the part of their men. In this way friction is avoided, unnecessary disputes do not arise, and the business is carried on, on both sides, with good will. I am not here for the purpose of attacking Lord Penrhyn, but I cannot believe that when it is once realised that the claim of the men is confined to what I have stated, and, on the other hand, that Lord Penrhyn, according to his own declaration, does not object to combination, it will not at the same time be realised that you have here a difference which with very little adjustment might be completely bridged over.

The other point—I agree it is a very delicate one—is as regards the relations of the men who have gone out and the men who have remained in or come in. Now we must try to put ourselves in the position of both parties to the controversy, and in doing so I think we shall all agree that, on the one hand, the men feel it would be a base act on their part to desert the men who had borne the brunt of the fight and to purchase their return to work by sacrificing the fortunes of those who had been their standard-bearers. On the other hand, I sympathise equally with the position of Lord Penrhyn; I should feel it a base thing to desert men who had worked for me when the other men were out. That, of course, constitutes a delicate situation. But even there the difficulty is not insuperable. For I find that my friend Sir Edward Clarke, in the course of negotiations, to which I am about to refer, actually arrived at an agreement on this very point with the representatives of the men, and a very sensible agreement it appears to have been. It is found embodied in a letter dated March 23rd, and it is in effect in these terms:

> "Lord Penrhyn undertakes upon the conclusion of the strike to readmit to employment at the quarry the full number of men required for carrying on the work of the quarry to the extent to which it was worked in October, 1900, and in any future employment of labour undertakes to give a preference to those who were employed at the quarry in October, 1900, and further undertakes that no exception shall be made in respect of any men whatever by reason of their having taken part in labour disputes in the quarry at any time since 1885."

A very sensible settlement on the part of Lord Penrhyn if he had assented to it. Then, on the other hand, the men readmitted—

> "Undertake to work peaceably with those now in employment at the quarry. In the event of any question arising at any time within three months from the commencement of work in relation to this clause, the same shall be submitted to the final arbitration of Sir Edward Clarke, K.C."

A *modus vivendi*, therefore, was perfectly attainable, and in fact had been practically attained.

Since we last had a debate in this House on this subject there has been a further development. Lord Penrhyn brought on an action for libel, which was tried before the Lord Chief Justice of England and a special jury of the City of London. In that action Lord Penrhyn recovered—if I may venture to express my personal opinion, properly recovered—substantial damages in respect of comments made upon him by the defendant passing beyond the limits of legitimate criticism. But a remarkable feature of that case was the expression of opinion as to the need for and the possibility of conciliation. The Lord Chief Justice, presiding at the trial, more than once intimated to the Bar, not that the action ought to be settled, but that the dispute ought to be settled. The special jury of the City, who found damages in £500 in favour of Lord Penrhyn, took the most unusual course of appending to their verdict a rider that with a little conciliation on both sides the dispute might be settled. And Sir Edward Clarke, having used all his exceptional and almost unrivalled powers as an advocate in support of Lord Penrhyn's case at the trial—my learned friend Sir Edward Clarke, one of the ornaments of the English Bar, whose lamentable absence from this House is regretted quite as much by his political opponents as by his political friends—Sir Edward Clarke, Lord Penrhyn's counsel, was so impressed with the necessity and the possibility of conciliation that he himself spontaneously—very much, I think, to his honour—undertook the task of mediator and conciliator. Sir Edward Clarke throughout these negotiations appears to have been in communication with Lord Penrhyn, who was made acquainted from stage to stage of the progress of the negotiations. Being in communication with Lord Penrhyn, Sir Edward Clarke remained up to the last moment sanguine as to the result. That is shown from his own letter. In the course of these negotiations it was shown conclusively by the draft agreement ultimately arrived at, but unfortunately never assented to, that there was an elastic margin of give and take between the two parties. But, unfortunately—I do not know the cause; that is left in darkness—just at the moment when success seemed certain, Sir Edward Clarke expressed his regret that he had received a letter from Lord Penrhyn putting an end to any hope of being able to bring about a termination of the dispute. We do not know how that arose, but I venture to say that the matter cannot be left there. Here were these two parties engaged in this controversy for nearly three years, at great loss to one and almost infinite suffering to the other, brought through the agency of a third party within a measurable distance almost within actual sight of peace and reconciliation, and it would be a monstrous thing if matters having been brought so near solution should now be allowed to lapse into their old condition of bitterness and antagonism. Neither I nor any one else can guarantee or predict success if the Board of Trade undertake this mission. But we do know that every impartial authority that has had the question under consideration, and not directly interested in it—the County Council of Carnarvon, the Lord Chief Justice, the special jury, and Lord Penrhyn's counsel—has come to the conclusion that it is a matter which might be, could be, and ought to be adjusted. The only authority which sits silent, folding its hands apparently in a mood of dogged and invincible inertia, is the Department to which Parliament has entrusted both the power and the duty of peacemaker. Surely we have seen enough in these days of great departments spending their time in finding excuses to leave half done or not done at all what Parliament requires of them. All I am asking the House to affirm is that till the Board of Trade changes its attitude, till it exerts itself whole-heartedly and with all the means at its disposal to reconcile this conflict, the public conscience will not be cleared if one step is left untrodden on the road which may and ought to lead to peace.

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) in seconding the Motion said whichever party is in the right or in the wrong on this prolonged and deplorable industrial dispute—and no doubt there are faults on both sides—nobody can question the fact that the men have put themselves in the right in the face of the public, and of the law of the land, by offering to submit the whole matter to conciliation or arbitration. Efforts have been made to help them by outside organisations and communities, but none at all have been made by the Government. The Standing Joint Committee of the Carnarvonshire County Council passed this resolution with regard to the attitude of the Government—

> "That the magnitude and long duration of this unfortunate quarrel, the widespread poverty and destitution caused in the district, and the serious industrial and commercial losses suffered by the country generally, have now reached so grave a point as to call for the intervention of His Majesty's Government, which so far as we can see is the only remaining Court to which appeal can be made."

I will not go over the various attempts which have been made at conciliation, but two gentlemen deputed by the Carnarvon County Council—one a Conservative and a Churchman, the other a Liberal and a Nonconformist, one, I believe, a personal friend of Lord Penrhyn himself,—met the men to see if they could bring the two parties together. They affirmed that they did not want to interfere with the matter in dispute, but merely to act as conciliators, on behalf of the County Council, to bring the parties together. What was Lord Penrhyn's attitude? First of all he pleaded illness and instructed his manager to meet the deputation. Afterwards when writing to express his regret that he could not give an interview he said:

> "I am, however, far from wishing to interpose any obstacle in the way of your giving my late workmen the benefit of your advice."

What was the proper reply of the deputation? They said:

> "We should not feel ourselves at liberty to give advice to your late workmen any more than we should undertake to advise your lordship. We are simply here in the hope that by ordinary intercourse and friendly discussion, an amicable settlement may be arrived at in the interests of public peace and of all parties concerned."

Afterwards I asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to intervene by putting the provisions of the Conciliation Act in force, and the reply I got was that neither party in the dispute had applied although, as I tried to show, there is a provision whereby an inquiry could be set to report on the question independently of the parties concerned. A few months afterwards the men were advised, and rightly advised, to apply to the Board of Trade. The right hon Gentleman then adopted a *non possumus* attitude, although there is a distinct provision enabling the Board to intervene if either of the parties apply for such intervention. But I will not follow on in that strain. I will deal with another aspect of the question. Lord Penrhyn himself has repeatedly expressed a desire—I hope an honest desire—to bring about industrial peace. He consented to meet four leaders of the men in an interview on condition that they should not talk about the restoration of the Quarry Committee. I am bound to say, however, that for eight or nine years the Quarry Committee worked well. The referee and arbitrator under the clause which brought about the Quarry Committee was Lord Penrhyn's own manager and estate agent, and I remember hearing the leader of the men, the late Mr. Robert Parry, almost on his deathbed, say that whenever they met the late Lord Penrhyn they always managed to arrive at amicable and peaceful settlements. In fact, the men, through their leader, over and over again asserted that the late Lord Penrhyn acted as a nobleman should with the representatives of the men through the Quarry Committee. However, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, the Quarry Committee has gone, and the men replied to Lord Penrhyn's letter in this way—that they had received his notification with satisfaction; that they were willing to omit any reference to the Quarry Committee and to confine themselves entirely to the question of representation. What could be fairer than that? But Lord Penrhyn said that that did not satisfy him, and he imposed a new condition, viz., that they should not discuss the question of representation in any form. He shifted from one point to the other, although the men waived objection after objection to meet him in a conciliatory spirit. In connection with this attitude I am reminded of a story told of a humorous theologian who once suggested a prescription for keeping Lent. "Conceive," he said, "a fervent desire for bodily mortification, and mortify that desire." Lord Penrhyn seems to have conceived a fervent desire for a really good settlement of the dispute, and to have mortified that desire. The men have over and over again expressed their willingness to submit the matter to arbitration. I have attended many of their mass meetings, and at the very first one I put it to the men whether they would not, independently of any outside intervention or interference, through their leaders meet Lord Penrhyn personally, apart from the manager, and the men unanimously voted that they would. But what does the desire for arbitration on the part of the men amount to if Lord Penrhyn will not meet them? Lord Penrhyn says he will not tolerate outside interference between himself and the men. Lord Penrhyn has not done his duty and proved his sincerity in the matter. The men, if they refused, would lose the support of public opinion which has so generously been given them through the strike; but they have shown themselves anxious to determine the dispute and loyally to accept the decision of any impartial arbitrator.

What is the point in dispute? The district has been singularly crimeless. I know it will be said that there have been assaults, violent acts, and cases of intimidation. But all those outrages and cases of intimidation were committed not at the instigation of the men's leaders, not by the masses of the men themselves, but by several wild and reckless youths, who have been asked to go back to the quarry and are working there to-day. I said that the Government had shown inaction in the whole matter. There is one exception. The Government did intervene on one occasion, and how? By sending the military down. Surely nobody will dare assert that sending the military came under the provisions of the Conciliation Act. What did the commanding officer say when I saw him at Bethesda? He wanted to know why he was there, and he begged me to remain there overnight, feeling sure that a few words in Welsh from me and the leading of the men in the singing of the National Anthem would keep the whole district peaceful and tractable. That commanding officer had Welsh blood in him. The action of His Majesty's Government in sending the military was condemned not only by the County Council of Carnarvonshire, but by the Lord Lieutenant of Carnarvonshire and by Lord Penrhyn's son-in-law, and a Motion against the importation of the military was carried by an overwhelming majority in the County Council. There are grave and complex social problems involved in this dispute. If we examine closely into this question we shall find that there is a land question, a housing question, a trade question—the whole social life of the people, in fact—mixed up with this dispute, and these factors are intensely emphasised by difference of race, language, religion, and politics. In one of the parishes in which these quarries are situated most of the houses belong to Lord Penrhyn, and in another parish most of the houses are on short leases granted by Lord Penrhyn and his father. Many of those leases have lapsed and Lord Penrhyn now owns the houses. Some of the leases had been extended to sixty years. Can anyone blame these quarrymen for clinging to the houses which they and their fathers have built? These men have built their chapels and schools upon Lord Penrhyn's estate. Many of the houses have small gardens adjoining. Lord Penrhyn, however, believes in giving the men small gardens, not of good land but mountain land, and practically these men have spent their money and labour and their very life in the homesteads which they have created.

There is a new feature I wish to call attention to. What will hon. Gentlemen opposite say to the fact that these quarrymen have built on Lord Penrhyn's property over twenty chapels, on leases. Lord Penrhyn refuses to give a freehold on which to build any Nonconformist chapels. There are eight or ten of them on thirty years leases and two or three on sixty years leases. These twenty chapels which the men have built have cost nearly £50,000, or an average of about £2,000 each. But that is not all. Lord Penrhyn has built two churches and one schoolroom, every one of them freehold. Not only does Lord Penrhyn give the Church of England the privilege of having the land free but he builds the churches as well, while the chapels and the schools have been built by the toilers in his quarry. There is always a clause in the lease that no other but religious meetings shall be held in the chapels. The quarrymen have built their own houses and they cling to them through the storm and stress of this struggle, and they also cling tenaciously to the chapels and schools. When Church of England places of worship were erected, that was done by Lord Penrhyn himself, because the people did not want them. The Nonconformist places of worship cannot be used for any purpose except a religious one, because Lord Penrhyn made it one of the conditions of his lease. The result is that political meetings have occasionally to be held in disused quarries on the roadside. No wonder that men with such fortitude of soul feel a grievance in not getting what is given to their English fellow-workers. The men contend that the managers of the quarries have victimised the leaders, and they are now demanding the right to appear before their employer represented by their own freely elected delegates. The quarrymen have never asked to be represented by trades union officials outside the quarry. Their demand is a most moderate one. They merely ask for a freely elected spokesman of their own. They have been denied the right to discuss grievances in their own dinner hour, they are not treated as men, and are sometimes sworn at by the managers. Not only this, but the men are subjected to a system of espionage. In the recent trial the jury expressed the opinion that by a little more conciliatory spirit on the part of Lord Penrhyn and his men, better relations might be restored at the Bethesda quarries. We now know the reason why Sir Edward Clarke's noble attempt to bring about a reconciliation has proved futile and vain. Lord Penrhyn has stated the reason in a letter to *The Times*, in the course of which he said—

> "I am convinced that the disturbances at the Penrhyn quarries are part of a deliberate plan and scheme of Socialistic aggression."

The House will wonder on what authority he based that assertion.

> "I have it," Lord Penrhyn wrote, "from the editor of a Radical organ in Mid Wales which has consistently supported the justice of my cause."

His lordship forgets that the Tory organ in the same neighbourhood, the most influential Conservative organ in Mid Wales, has just as consistently supported the men's cause. So it is a piece of rivalry between these two editors. And yet Lord Penrhyn treats this seriously. The editor of this small Radical organ says he got his information from Mr. Michael Davitt, who made the statement in question in a political speech upon the land question. Mr. Davitt, in *The Times*, gives a most emphatic denial to this statement and says the whole story is a figment of this gentleman's imagination. The remarkable thing is this—this very gentleman, in a leading article, says—

> "Mr. Michael Davitt's words were mild, his recommendations moderate, and his denunciations of Welsh landlords noble."

At that meeting Mr. Michael Davitt and this editor both delivered speeches from the same platform. Mr. Davitt was given a respectful hearing but this editor was hooted from the platform for his extraordinary language. Everybody in Mid Wales knew what value to give to the utterances of the editor of this Radical organ, and I venture to affirm that Lord Penrhyn is the only public man in the Principality who is influenced, or can be influenced, by the opinion of this erratic and irresponsible journalist. We are given to understand that the men cannot be taken back altogether, that 600 of them will be debarred; and that there are some whom Lord Penrhyn will refuse to admit at all. The figures show that there is room in the quarry for all the men. One hundred have died during this conflict, about 200 have emigrated to Canada, 200 are permanently employed elsewhere, and 500 of the strikers have gone back. At the beginning of the lock-out 2,800 men were employed at the quarry. The number of strikers is 1,800, and they can easily go to the quarry, because the output is not sufficient to meet the demands of the slate market. I know that the manager has written very learnedly to *The Times* giving an account of the increased output, and I will deal with that in a moment. I am informed by a gentleman who understands the subject that Welsh slates are scarce and that prices have increased 7½ per cent. During past months orders from England and elsewhere were difficult to meet on account of the reduction of the output. In fact the market is flooded with German, French, and American slates. The American slate quarry owners have for many years tried to effect a lodgement for their slates in this country, and they have now succeeded owing to this long dispute, and it will be a difficult thing to dislodge them. The House will therefore see that it is a dispute which affects the trade and commerce of the country as well.

It has been said that the workmen in other Welsh quarries do not sympathise with the men in connection with the Penrhyn dispute. This is a gross misrepresentation. The men engaged in the quarries round about have sent me copies of resolutions they have passed which practically amount to this—they express the deepest sympathy with the Bethesda quarrymen in their struggle, their strong desire for a settlement of the dispute, and their earnest hope that the Government will adopt measures to prevent a recurrence. One word only to the contrary have I ever heard since the dispute commenced, and that was from a clergyman who said that the curse of trades unionism has fallen on the district and that the men should learn the duty of obeying their superiors. In the districts round about they have given contributions of £1,000 for the relief fund. Some will say that only a small portion of the quarrymen are unionists. What are the figures? Out of 10,000 quarrymen in North Wales, over 6,000 are unionists. All the trades unions and all the labour organisations throughout the country have given their active sympathy. The Government alone in a pitiful way has refused by its inaction and ineptitude to take part in the settlement of the dispute. I must say that certain individual Gentlemen on the Front Bench have been kind and conciliatory to me in dealing with this question, but as a collective political organism they have been thoroughly paralysed in the case of this dispute. What has President Roosevelt done in America in connection with the anthracite coal miners? There was in connection with their dispute a record of twenty-one murders, a long list of brutal assaults, and of houses dynamited.

There was no end of outrage and violence. Did President Roosevelt send more soldiers, bayonets, and guns there? No; he appointed a Commission to inquire, so that the disastrous industrial war might be brought to an end. Amity, peace, and prosperity now reign there. I will not dwell on the circumstances of the distress at Bethesda. They are too well known and harrowing. The people are being relieved by contributions from all parts of the United Kingdom, the Colonies, and the United States, but these contributions, I am sorry to say, have not the supreme virtue of healing the trouble. Infinitely more than any party triumph in this dispute would be a successful effort to replant these men in their homes and in their quarry, and to restore industrial peace in the neighbourhood on just and honourable terms.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the grave social and public interests involved in the continuance of the industrial dispute at Bethesda, this House condemns the inaction of His Majesty's Government, and declares its opinion that prompt intervention on their part is imperative to arrive at a just and effectual settlement."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked whether this was the proper stage at which to move an Amendment, of which he had given notice, to include the inaction of the Government regarding the disputes at Ballachulish and Settle in the proposed condemnation of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: Such an Amendment would be out of order. It relates to a totally different subject.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): This is the third or fourth occasion on which the dispute at Bethesda quarry has been the subject of discussion in this House. That the hon. Member for North Carnarvon should plead the cause of men who are his constituents is very intelligible, and I do not complain of his doing so on the present occasion, nor have I any complaint to offer of the tone and temper in which he has dealt with the subject either now or on previous occasions, though I am bound to add that I think the speech to which we have just listened does not throw very much light upon the real subject at issue between the two sides to the dispute. But that the manner in which a Department of the Government has exercised the discretion vested in it by Parliament, of interfering or of not interfering in a particular dispute—after that subject has been discussed and voted upon more than once in the House—should be brought up again and made the subject of a solemn vote of censure is, in my judgment, a procedure which does require strong reason to justify it. Surely there ought to be some proportion between the means and the end. I admit that the refusal of the Board of Trade up to the present time to intervene in this dispute might very properly form the subject of discussion when the Board of Trade Vote was under debate in this House, but I really do think that either the Opposition must be very anxious to bring on a vote of censure or very hard up for material on which to found such a vote before they would take the course they have pursued to-day. Under these circumstances, I listened with some curiosity to hear the justification which the right hon. Gentleman intended to put forward. Well, I have listened to him, and I am free to confess that my curiosity has been turned into astonishment. Why, Sir, the very least I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman should have done was to prove that if the Board of Trade had intervened in this dispute there was a reasonable prospect—I won't go a bit further than that — that such intervention would have been attended with successful results. The right hon. Gentleman has not even made an attempt to prove that. He put the matter in quite another way. He said it is not possible to predict with certainty, or even strong probability, that success would be the result of intervention. Well, nobody has contended, certainly I have not maintained, that a strong probability of success would be necessary before the Board of Trade used its powers under the Conciliation Act. What I maintain in this case is that there is practically no prospect of success whatever, and it is on that ground that the Board of Trade has declined to use its powers under this Act. This is, to my mind, the essential and the only serious and vital question we have to discuss, but before I come to that, there are one or two subsidiary points touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman, to which I should like to refer.

The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of this dispute as being a dispute of national importance. I do not wish at all to underrate the importance of the dispute at Bethesda quarry, but I am bound to say that when it is compared, as the hon. Member for North Carnarnvon has compared it to-day,to the coal strike which brought about the intervention of President Roosevelt, it is really necessary to ask the House to examine a little more closely what are the facts of the case. The coal dispute in the United States was one which not only directly affected the coal trade and almost the entire mining industry in the States, but also paralysed the whole commerce and industry of the country. That was a dispute which might fairly be described as of national importance. There have also been disputes which might fairly be described as of national importance in this country. There was the dispute in which Lord Rosebery ultimately intervened. That was undoubtedly a dispute of national importance. There, again, the entire industry of the country was affected; but what is the case in North Wales at the present time? The difference between Lord Penrhyn and his quarrymen is essentially a dispute of a local character. No doubt you cannot have a dispute which affects 2,000 or 3,000 men without grievous and lamentable consequences ensuing. I do not wish to minimise the consequences at all; but, after all, a dispute involving 2,000 or 3,000 men in a particular quarry is not comparable for a moment, for instance, with the South Wales coal dispute, in which Sir Edward Fry acted as conciliator, in which 30,000 men were involved, and which prejudicially affected the entire trade of that part of the country. Moreover, I will ask the attention of the House to this. Although originally this dispute affected between 2,000 and 3,000 men, at the present moment the quarry is working at something like half its capacity. I do not know the precise number of men who are working. I have had figures presented to me from different quarters and they do not exactly correspond with those mentioned by the hon. Member for Carnarvon, but, broadly speaking, there are at least 1,000 men employed there at the present time, of whom 700 were employed there before the dispute began. I believe that in reality it is something more. The hon. Member opposite told us that 100 or more of the men originally engaged in the quarry are dead, that 200 have emigrated, and I am informed that something like 200 have found employment in other parts of Wales. That being the case, the House will see that there are probably not more than 700 men at the present moment out of employment in connection with this dispute. I regret exceedingly that even 700 men should be out of employment in consequence of a difference between them and their employer, but again I say that I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is justified in describing this dispute as one of national importance.

Then the right hon. Gentleman stated, and stated truly, that there are peculiar features in this dispute. There is one very peculiar feature, and that is that the employer is a single individual and is a man who, to all appearance, would prefer to close his quarry altogether and withdraw from the business rather than give in on the principal subject at issue. That is obviously a peculiarity which makes the settlement of the dispute by outside parties a matter of peculiar difficulty. But the subject of the dispute is not peculiar. The subject of the dispute, at all events up to the late negotiations undertaken by Sir Edward Clarke, was a question of the recognition by Lord Penrhyn of a trade union committee as the means of communication between himself and his employees. The recognition by an employer of the outside influence exercised by a trade union is a question which has constantly arisen between employers and employed, and has constantly been the subject of dispute between them, not only in this country but also in America. I am not going to express any opinion as to the rights or the wrongs in this question. Lord Penrhyn may be right or he may be wrong from his point of view, as the men may be from theirs. That is not, in my opinion, a subject on which the Government ought to be called upon to express an opinion, and especially the

Minister entrusted with the administration of the Conciliation Act. The right hon. Gentleman, on the whole, maintained the attitude he told us he intended to observe—that is to say, of not presenting the case as an advocate. On the whole I think he observed that attitude substantially, though not, perhaps, entirely. I cannot say that of the hon. Member who followed him. He did attempt to go more or less into the merits of the case; but I venture to express the hope that in the debate the House will endeavour, as far as possible, to restrict the discussion to the particular issue of the action, or rather the inaction, of the Board of Trade—the refusal of the Board of Trade to intervene under the Conciliation Act. I venture to assert this view of the matter strongly, because I really think that if we are to discuss the merits of the dispute we are more likely to embitter the dispute than to assuage the animosities that have been excited.

I now come to what is really the essential matter—namely, could the Board of Trade, acting under the provisions of the Conciliation Act, have usefully intervened, and, if so, could it even at the eleventh hour usefully intervene? It may not, perhaps, be out of place that I should remind right hon. Gentlemen opposite that they have had no personal experience of the working of the Act of 1896. That Act was passed after they had left office, and they have not been in office since. Therefore they have not had any personal experience of the working of the Act. And I do think that when the House is discussing the wisdom or the unwisdom of the action of the Board of Trade, it should not be forgotten that we are acting on an eight years experience of this Act, which right hon. Gentlemen opposite have not had. In the administration of the Act the essential point to observe is that it is a voluntary act without a trace of compulsion in it, there is no compulsion on the Board of Trade to act unless they think fit to do so. The Board of Trade cannot exercise any kind of compulsion on the parties to the dispute. The Act expressly states that where a difference exists, the Board of Trade may, if they think fit, exercise all or any of the following powers. I should like to go into them *seriatim*, in order that the House may judge whether we could have acted with advantage under any of the powers given to us. In the first place, the Board of Trade has the power to inquire into the cause and circumstances of the dispute. In the second place, it may, on its own initiative, take action with a view to bringing the parties to the dispute together. In the third place, it, may, upon the application of one of the parties to a dispute, appoint a conciliator; and, lastly, on the application of both parties, it may appoint an arbitrator. We may set aside the last power as a thing out of the question on the present occasion, inasmuch as only one party has made an application to the Board of Trade. As regards the first power, to inquire into the cause and circumstances of the difference, we have taken the steps always taken by the Board of Trade in all cases of dispute of which we receive information. We took such steps as we thought desirable to inform ourselves of the circumstances, including the sending out of schedules to both parties, which were duly answered and returned. I know there are some hon. Members who wish that we should use this power to inquire into the cause and circumstances of the dispute, not only for inquiry, but also with a view to making a report for the purpose of guiding public opinion. Now, I submit that that is not the purpose of that power, that that is not contemplated by Sub-section (*a*) of Section 2 of the Act. If it had been contemplated undoubtedly provision would have been made in the Act for a report. And let the House observe this. In the Act as originally introduced there was a power not merely to inquire into the cause and circumstances, but also to report. An Amendment, however, was moved in Grand Committee to omit the words "to report," and that Amendment was accepted by my right hon. friend the then President of the Board of Trade. I think, therefore, that it is clear that the Board of Trade could not have been expected to act under Sub-section A of the clause. With regard to initiating mediation under Sub sections B and C, I admit that the Board of Trade has the power to intervene, but, quite apart from the general discretion which the Act gives to the Board, it is called upon directly before appointing a conciliator to take into consideration the adequacy of the means for conciliation, the circumstances of the trade and district. The words of the Act were carefully selected to lay no absolute duty on the Board of Trade to intervene; it has guarded the discretion of the Board at every point. Now, what is the test the Board of Trade should apply to ascertain whether any case is a proper one for intervention? In my judgment there is only one test, whether such intervention is likely to conduce to a settlement of the dispute. If it appears that such intervention is not likely to conduce to a settlement, then the Act lays no duty on the Board to intervene, but rather suggests that it should not intervene. With respect to this particular dispute, it is really beyond controversy that, from all that has transpired, if the Board had sent down a conciliator to Bethesda there was not the slightest prospect that such action would have tended to bring the dispute to an end. I may be asked how I can be sure of that without having actually tried it. Well, we had various indications sufficient for us to form an absolute conclusion on that point. In the first place there was the past history of the dispute between Lord Penrhyn and his quarrymen in 1896, when the Board of Trade did attempt to intervene. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Board of Trade was better advised then than now—[An HON. MEMBER: Better inspired.]—better inspired than now. But I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the answer to the Board of Trade from Lord Penrhyn was conveyed in the words he has quoted declining to accept a suggestion the acceptance of which, Lord Penrhyn said, would establish a precedent for interference with his private affairs. The Board of Trade replied by saying they could not send down an official to be present at the conference if that would be contrary to Lord Penrhyn's wishes. Therefore, in effect, when the Board of Trade ascertained that interference would prove useless they did not persist or press the matter.

MR. ASQUITH: They expressed their opinion of Lord Penrhyn's refusal.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That may be, but they did not do what the right hon. Gentleman says we ought to have done. I do not know if the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me, but I may say that perhaps we have gained a little more experience of the administration of the Act since then and are more inclined to ascertain the probability of successful action before attempting to interfere. Of course there may be cases when there is a probability that the intervention of a conciliator may produce the desired result, but in these cases we have never started with the absolute certainty that if we sent a conciliator one party to the dispute would refuse to have anything to do with him. That is the point the House should consider. The Act does not indicate that there is any obligation on the part of the Board of Trade to send down a conciliator with the knowledge that such action would be futile. One quotation from Lord Penrhyn shows that he would not accept the services of a conciliator from the Board of Trade, and we know that also from a communication made to us from the men themselves at the end of last year, when they asked for the appointment of a conciliator. In that communication the men described the attempts already made to secure a settlement of the dispute, and among other documents sent to the Board of Trade was a pamphlet containing the correspondence between Lord Penrhyn and the Carnarvonshire County Council, and from passages in this correspondence it is quite clear that had the Board sent a conciliator Lord Penrhyn would have refused to receive him or negotiate with him. Lord Penrhyn, writing to the representative of the County Council, said he must decline to recognise the right of any person or body corporate not connected with the quarry to interfere. Then he was asked by the men if he would be prepared to accept the services of the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour or Lord Rosebery or both as conciliators, and he replied—

> "I regret I must decline to accede to your suggestion."

That we were perfectly right in our conclusion was also shown by the statement of Lord Penrhyn's counsel at the late trial and by Lord Penrhyn's letter to *The Times*, published on March 21st, in which he wrote—

> "It has also been admitted that the main object of the strikers in 1896, and later, and now has been and is to compel me to recognise the Quarry Committee and to deal with it as a representative body, and this, mainly because it is not a representative body, is what I am resolved not to do in any circumstances. It was for this reason, and because in my opinion there was no subject matter for discussion that I declined to encourage any action by the Board of Trade under the Conciliation Act."

This extract is absolutely conclusive. I look upon this matter purely from the point of view of bringing the dispute to a termination, and I venture to say, after what passed in 1897, that anybody reading the correspondence that passed between Lord Penrhyn and the Board of Trade—a rather angry correspondence, I am afraid it was—will see that of all possible conciliation that of the Board of Trade had the least chance of success. I hope I have convinced the House that the chances of success were *nil*. But it may be said the publication or report of a conciliator might have been of public service. The Act says that if a person is appointed to act as a conciliator he shall inquire into the cause and circumstances of the dispute and otherwise shall endeavour to bring about a settlement of the dispute, and shall report his proceedings to the Board of Trade. He is not to report as to the merits of the dispute for the guidance of the public, but is to make a report of his proceedings. I have carefully looked through the report written by Sir Edward Fry describing his proceedings as conciliator in the South Wales coal strike. In that case also one party to the dispute refused to receive or recognise Sir Edward Fry, and he had to return without having effected a settlement of the dispute. There is no word in his report as to the merits of the dispute, and I do not believe that in the whole history of the administration of the Act it would be found that the conciliator thought it his duty to pass judgment or form an estimate as to the merits of the dispute. This case was really very different from that case. If the Board of Trade had known, when it asked Sir Edward Fry to undertake this duty, that conciliation in the proper sense of the term would be impossible, because the masters refused to have anything to do with him as a conciliator, I feel no doubt that the Board would never have sent him on such a mission. In the circumstances Sir Edward Fry did what he could, not to persuade the men to take any particular course, but to lead them to place their case in as plain a manner as possible before the masters, and that is the full extent of what he did. He did not report on the merits of the case, but in the words of the Act he merely described his proceedings. I think I said the other day when this subject was being discussed, that the Act might conceivably be stretched in such a way as to enable the Board to send down a conciliator who should make a report intended to guide public opinion. But I think that such a proceeding would be stretching the Act. I do not think it was ever contemplated by the Act, and in this particular instance, had such a course been pursued, I feel convinced that it would not have advanced the settlement of the dispute one iota. It would, however, have prejudiced the action of the Board in dealing with future cases under the Act.

There are one or two other matters which ought not to be left entirely out of sight in connection with the suggestion that the Board of Trade ought to send down a conciliator whether Lord Penrhyn would or would not receive him. Let me remind the House that—and this is a very material fact—in 1897 the men declined the intervention of the Board of Trade. They themselves seem to have felt that there was really nothing to be hoped for from the intervention of the Board of Trade. But in the present case the men did not apply to the Board of Trade until two years after the commencement of the dispute—in other words, when their resources were falling low. I do not mean to suggest that the men in making their application did not desire that the dispute should be settled, but I think they also thought that the mere fact of the Board of Trade intervening would probably assist them to get further funds to carry on the dispute. From time to time the Board receives applications for intervention, forwarded when one of the parties to a dispute is nearly exhausted, and our experience has shown us that it is necessary to be extremely careful in dealing with applications of that sort, which may have the *prima facie* appearance, not so much to secure the settlement of the dispute, as to endeavour to secure support for one side or the other. Then there is another point we have to consider. Not very long after the application was made to us from the men out of work, we also had an application from the men who had returned to work, including the strangers employed, numbering, I think, at that time close upon 1,000 men. The application of the latter was that the Board of Trade should not intervene. The Act directs the Board, if it thinks fit, to exercise its power to appoint a conciliator on the application of the employers or workmen interested. Will anybody contend that the men actually engaged in the working of the quarries were not workmen interested? I do not put this forward as a decisive consideration. I should not have paid any attention to it had there been, in my opinion, a prospect of settling the dispute. Still, I do mention it as a material consideration. Lastly, I have further to observe that the Act distinctly says that the Board has to take into consideration the adequacy of the means available for conciliation in the dispute. In this particular case there was a regular arrangement made under the settlement of 1897, under which the men could meet the management and lay their complaints before the management. Unless we had reason to believe that those means had been properly tried and had been exhausted, we might, on that ground alone, I think, have to consider before appointing a conciliator. But the main contention I have to put before the House is this—that we did not appoint a conciliator because we were convinced that to do so could not lead to any useful result. It has been said:—What harm would there have been in appointing a conciliator? Having regard to the former relations between Lord Penrhyn and the Board of Trade, I think that any attempt to force a conciliator on him would unquestionably have embittered and envenomed the dispute. Moreover, if we had appointed a conciliator, I cannot imagine any case in which we could have refused to do so on an application being made to us from either side. I cannot conceive a case in which it was clearer that the intervention of the Board would have been useless. Therefore, had we consented to intervene in this case we should practically have to do so in every case in which application is made. But the Act expressly confers on the Board a discretion. If we had consented to act on this occasion that discretion would have disappeared.

I have given to the House my reasons for being convinced that the intervention of the Board of Trade could not have had any result; but I should like to ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite a question. If they are successful in carrying this Motion, the inevitable result would be that His Majesty's present advisers would resign, and presumably a Government would be formed from right hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite. In that event what action would they take? They would have been brought into office because their predecessors had failed to use the powers given to them for conciliation. The new Government would presumably be under the immediate obligation of putting these powers into operation. Suppose they sent down a conciliator, who made a report of the kind which seems to be desired by hon. Members opposite—a report going into the merits of the case, with a view to directing public opinion, and expressing the view that Lord Penrhyn was in the wrong and his quarrymen in the right. Nobody who has followed the history of the dispute could suppose that Lord Penrhyn would accept an *ex parte* opinion of that kind. So long as the men could hold out the dispute would continue. What would the new Government do then? Their position would be almost ridiculous—certainly somewhat humiliating. I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman disclaim any idea of advocating further legislation—anything in the nature of compulsory arbitration. A rumour—to which I admit I never attached any importance—credited the right hon. Gentleman and some of his friends with the intention of bringing forward a Bill to expropriate Lord Penrhyn from the quarries, in which case the property would have been, I suppose, put up to auction or worked by the State. No doubt that was an absurd suggestion, but then, what would the new Government do on the undoubted failure of any efforts they might make to settle the dispute? I suppose that such an event as the defeat of the Government did not enter into their calculations. They took it for granted, no doubt, that they could attack us, and assume the *rôle* of the champions of the interests of labour without incurring the responsibilities which success in such a case would necessarily entail upon them. It may be, regarded as a party manœuvre, the step they have now taken is a more or less dexterous one. But I feel bound to say that the Motion which they have made this afternoon, while it cannot possibly do any good to the men who are now out of employment at Bethesda quarries, cannot but exercise a prejudicial effect upon the future working of the Conciliation Act, the provisions of which they ask us to put in force in connection with this dispute. That Act can be successfully worked only by the exercise of the utmost discretion and the most rigid impartiality, and I say that upon the Party opposite will rest the responsibility of having made more difficult the exercise of that discretion and the maintenance of that impartiality by dragging into the party arena a question which, in the opinion of everybody who wishes to see this Act bear good and useful fruit, ought above all others to be excluded from it.

*MR. BURT (Morpeth): I should have been very well content to leave my view of the position as presented in the admirable speech of my right hon. friend the Member for East Fife, but there are one or two points which perhaps I may usefully contribute to the discussion. The right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to think that my right hon. friend had rather exaggerated when he spoke of this as a question of national importance. I associate myself with my right hon. friend in that expression. I think it will be admitted that the conflict is one of very great gravity. I have known strikes and lock-outs which involved greater numbers of men, but we have had in this district chronic unrest for the last six or seven years. Of that period I should say that fully one-half has been occupied by strikes and lock-outs. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that unless thousands or tens of thousands of men are involved in a conflict, and the trade of the whole country is paralysed, that it is not a matter of national importance? This matter suggests, if it does not raise, questions that go to the very foundations of the rights of private property in land. As to where the faults may be, I shall copy the example of my right hon. friend; I will not apportion the blame, but blame there is somewhere. I have had the opportunity of meeting the quarrymen of North Wales in mass meetings. I never saw a finer body of workmen in my life. They are sober and law-abiding; under circumstances of extreme temptation there has been no serious crime in the locality. As to Lord Penrhyn, I shall say nothing except this—that as an employer he is out-of-date. This conflict is going on at a time when conciliation is spreading. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us the other night that the great lesson to employers and employed, to capitalist and workman, is that they should come closer together with the view of arriving at a mutual understanding. Conciliation is spreading, and that is almost the only—at any rate, it is the most—encouraging feature in connection with our industrial life. If we compare 1897 with last year we find that, whereas in the former year there were about 750,000 workmen under conciliation boards, in 1902 the number had risen to 1,250,000. Is it not very desirable—I am sure everybody thinks it is—that this spirit of conciliation and goodwill should spread over the whole of the country, and reach even Bethesda, and, if possible, Lord Penrhyn? Reference has been made to the difficulty of outside interference. I know how delicate and difficult it is. More than once in my own experience I have found that the inopportune intervention of fussy but well-meaning people has done much more harm than good. But we have had instances of successful intervention. The late Bishop of Durham intervened at the right moment, and other instances can be and have been given. I entirely agree with my right hon. friend that the State has peculiar advantages in the way of intervening. The President of the Board of Trade has truly said that the intervention must be accompanied by tact and impartiality. Of course these qualities are needed, but courage also is required. He who intervenes in cases of this kind must not fear his fate too much. He undoubtedly has to risk something. He has to risk want of success, but I think it scarcely likely, in a case of this kind, that more harm than good would be done.

The right hon. Gentleman has told us what his powers are. I understand that his great objection is that he is convinced beforehand that Lord Penrhyn would not accept a conciliator from the Board of Trade. He has also told us that the Act is voluntary, that it has not a touch or tincture of compulsion in it. That is perfectly true, and I, for one, would not have it otherwise. I am not in favour of compulsory arbitration, and compulsory conciliation seems to be a contradiction in terms. It is like compulsory brotherly love. Conciliation, like the quality of mercy, must not be put under compulsion. But the Act does give the right hon. Gentleman certain powers. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has not the power to appoint an arbitrator unless both parties ask it. But one of the parties to the dispute has asked him to intervene and appoint a conciliator. The men asked Lord Penrhyn two years ago to go to arbitration. It may be a rather sweeping assertion, but my own feeling is that the party who refuses arbitration, whether employer or workman, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred by that refusal places himself in the wrong. The men offered to submit the case to arbitration. I know this has no bearing upon the Government, but what has a bearing upon the Government is the fact that they have power of initiation. The right hon. Gentleman said he knew that Lord Penrhyn would refuse to accept the conciliator. Very likely he would. But I do not think that that justifies the right hon. Gentleman or the Board of Trade in refusing to appoint a conciliator and to collect evidence. By taking this course information would be collected, and it would come from an unbiassed and unprejudiced quarter. Pressure would be brought to bear upon Lord Penrhyn, and I hold, Sir, that in these disputes it is necessary very often to bring pressure to bear upon workmen as well as upon employers. If you collect and disseminate information, you then have a basis for an effective appeal to public opinion, and you may depend upon it that public opinion in its verdict will be just and fair to all parties. I believe that in the long run public opinion will compel whichever party shows stupidity and stubbornness to yield to reason and common sense.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): The case for the Government seems to be such a strong one that I do not think the contest will be so unequal as might otherwise be supposed at first sight. I cannot conceive on what grounds the Front Opposition Bench has moved a vote of censure except it be to show that they are in line with the Labour Party. Nothing has happened since the discussion in March last, except that there has been a libel action in which Lord Penrhyn has recovered damages from the other side, although they defended themselves on the grounds which have been advanced to-day. What is the allegation which would have justified the Board of Trade intervening in this matter? It is that there had been tyranny so gross and that the extent of the mischief which this dispute is doing to the community was so large that it was the duty of the Government to take steps to stop it. What is the head and front of Lord Penrhyn's offending? It is that he refuses to allow the Quarry Committee to interfere, and refuses to take back a larger number of men than his quarry will hold for its economical working. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Hon. Gentlemen will have plenty of time to deal with my errors and blunders. It is said that Lord Penrhyn objects to his workmen combining, but he does not do so. He is perfectly prepared to allow combination among his men, and I will show that that combination is satisfactory, but he is not prepared to allow a committee to intervene between him and his workmen, more especially a committee which is not representative of the whole of the workmen, and which interferes in the government of the quarry. He is determined that every man in his employment shall have the opportunity of coming to him direct, or to his manager on his behalf, for the redress of grievances. Let me read an extract from their own minute book.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): May I ask the date of that?

Mr. VICARY GIBBS: It is a resolution which was passed when the Quarry Committee was first started. [An Hon. Member: 1874.] The resolution reads —

> "Resolved that no complaint be received except from one who was a member of the union."

Is that a position which Lord Penrhyn could be asked to tolerate? Should the men in his employment, who were doing their work properly, be shut out from all communication with their employer unless they paid fees to an organisation of which they did not approve? Let me read another resolution from the same book—

> "To obtain for the next Committee meeting the names of those who refuse to pay to the union, and that the representative adopt the most secret method for doing so."

That is not the sort of organisation I should like to have amongst a body of labourers or quarrymen working for me, and I am not surprised that Lord Penrhyn does not receive this organisation with any enthusiasm, more especially when talking of tyranny. There can be no greater tyranny than an organisation which acts secretly and for the purpose of intimidation in order to force men into its ranks. The union does not embrace more than 50 per cent. of the quarrymen in its ranks, and it was monstrous, therefore, that it should claim to represent the whole quarry. I also said that the Quarry Committee had interfered with the working of the quarry, and may I quote one extract from the same source on this point—

> "Resolved that we approve of compelling crews in which there are two partners to take an additional partner."

What can be a more glaring instance of direct interference with the working of a quarry and injuring its economical working than that? Is it tyranny for Lord Penrhyn to insist as a condition to any arrangement between him and his men that there should be complete access to him for all his men, whether unionist or non-unionist for the redress of grievances, or to prevent the virtual control of his quarry passing to a body which are not representative of the men? As to the question of a substitute for the Quarry Committee, Lord Penrhyn offered it and it was accepted by the workmen, and that is offered again now by Lord Penrhyn if the Quarry Committee be abandoned. Let us consider whether that is a fair substitute, and whether it truly gives the power of combination to the men. I do not suppose that my own opinion will have much weight, and therefore I will give the opinion of others. The financial secretary of the quarrymen in August, 1897, said "he thought that all would acknowledge that that substitute was real combination." The *Daily Chronicle*, which was the organ of the men in that dispute, said—

> "The right of effective combination, of effective representation, and of effective collective action all round has been secured."

That is not all. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire, who seconded this Motion, sang almost a pæan on the subject. He said—

> "He congratulated them upon the right of combination, the abolition of individualism and the recognition of collectivism."

That was accepted in 1897 and recognised by the organs of the workmen as an admirable arrangement for the men, and that arrangement is open now. I suppose it will be said that the spirit of the arrangement was not observed. [An Hon. Member: Hear, hear.] Does the hon. Member say that that was proved instead of disproved in the trial a few days ago? The only cases which were advanced were those of men who had been dismissed, and it was insinuated had been dismissed because of their action in favour of the union. Those five cases were examined, and I unhesitatingly say that they all broke down.

A great deal has been said against Lord Penrhyn. I do not know him myself. I never saw him, and would not know him if I met him in the street. One thing has never been said against him so far as I know, and that is that he is a rogue. He would be a rogue if he allowed a man to be dismissed under the pretence that he had committed some offence against the rules and regulations of the quarry, whereas he was merely dismissed because he was a member of the union. [OPPOSITION cries of dissent.] I think that is not the general opinion of Lord Penrhyn. I do not think you would find that it is the opinion among the Welsh quarrymen themselves. One of these five men was inefficient and was not re-engaged, and the others were men who had committed offences. Two of them had committed an offence which was extremely dangerous to themselves and to the other men in the quarry beside them—offences against which they had themselves protested and asked to have stringent regulations passed against. They were offences against not only the rules of the quarry, but the rules of the Home Office. These men were removed, and I think very properly on that account. Another man was removed for an offence which Lord Penrhyn offered to disclose if the other side wished it, and the other side gracefully declined the offer. What it may have been I am not prepared to say. It evidently was an offence which the other side preferred that Lord Penrhyn should not disclose. Another man was discharged for gross insolence to one of the managers, and for refusing to apologise therefor, and as far as the jury were concerned, they considered his action perfectly proper. I should like to point out that this is not peculiarly arbitrary conduct on the part of Lord Penrhyn. There is no quarry in Wales where a quarry committee is allowed. The very same fight took place in the case of the Taff Vale dispute. The very same fight took place in the case of the Dinorwic Quarry. That dispute took place there in 1886, and the Quarry Committee was then got rid of, because it was recognised as a nuisance and mischief to the quarry. As to the extent of the dispute, I am informed that there are now 1,000 men at work in the quarry, and that the maximum required for the satisfactory, efficient, and complete working of the quarry is another 1,200 men. That is to say, 2,200 men altogether. Well, I quite admit that it is a most distressing thing that there should be any men out of employment or in trouble in this matter, but it is impossible to compare this dispute, important as it is, with such things as the great mining strike of 1893, when 300,000 men were involved; the South Wales coal strike, when 100,000 men were involved; or the boot and shoe strike, when 60,000 men were involved. This is a local dispute. It is a most interesting dispute, though not a very big one, because it does represent a great and important principle. I quite agree that it represents on one side a determined, courageous, and as I think generous and honourable employer, doing what he believes to be right; and on the other side, a body of men determined to pull him to his knees if they can, and to call in the aid of the Government in doing so if they can, because they think the success of Lord Penrhyn in managing the quarry as he is managing it for his own advantage and that of the men, is a death-blow to the aims of gentlemen who desire to bring every trade and every manufacturer under the direct control and interference of the State.

Let me for a moment examine a few of the statements which have been made to-day, and on the 5th of March, by the hon. Member for North Carnarvon. I will only deal with those which are sufficiently specific and admit of an answer. I cannot answer the statement that Lord Penrhyn is a "bloody tyrant." I can only say that he is a high-minded nobleman, or something of that kind, but then we are "no forrader." The hon. Member says there is no discipline in the quarry. How does he know? And why, if he knows it, does he not give some evidence of the fact? There are some convictions for assault, but there are no other troubles that I know of. There are 1,000 men engaged in the quarry earning fine wages—better wages than they have ever earned in the past. [OPPOSITION cries of dissent.] Oh, yes, they are earning better wages. I am not saying that there is any peculiar generosity on the part of Lord Penrhyn in the matter. What I say is that if you get rid of the Quarry Committee you can manage the quarry better and afford to pay better wages. The hon Member says also that the quarry is worked at a loss. I do not know why that should worry hon.

Gentlemen opposite, but as a matter of fact I am able to say that they are entirely mistaken in supposing that it is worked at a loss. It is working very well. He says that the local trade has been ruined. What is that statement based upon? It is based upon the fact that during the last three years one butcher's shop has been closed, owing to circumstances entirely outside of the strike, and as a matter of fact other shops, not supplying articles which I can describe as necessaries, have been opened in Bethesda during the last two or three years. Let me take another point. It was quoted as a great grievance that men were suspended for two days if late in coming to their work in the quarry. No doubt that does seem hard, but I should like to remind hon. Members who are not acquainted with the subject that a quarry is not like an ordinary factory, where men come in and are marked, as was the case with us at College, with pencil and paper. The men are drawn from all parts of the country, and according to where they live they enter the quarry at the nearest points to their homes, and it is therefore essential that there should be a strict rule as to late coming in the morning. I may say that the rule was altered in 1901, although perhaps without the knowledge of the hon. Gentleman who referred to the subject. The suspension does not take place on the first occasion. On the second occasion it is for a quarter of a day, and on the third occasion for half a day. There is great complaint that the men are not allowed to discuss their grievances in their own time. It does not mean that they are not allowed to discuss grievances in their own time outside the quarry, but it means that the dinner hour is not to be used for the holding of mass meetings. For, obviously, if you have a quarry with a large number of union and non-union men and you have public meetings of one class in the sight of the other you will very soon have disturbance and the peace broken. It is most reasonable and proper that Lord Penrhyn should say—I may say that it is not Lord Penrhyn alone but every other quarry proprietor—that he will not allow public meetings during the dinner hour. We are told that the customary holiday is taken away. I honestly say that I do not know what that refers to. I have made as close inquiry as I can, and so far as I can find out no change whatever has been made in the holidays since 1885. I cannot answer that complaint until I know the particular thing to which the hon. Member who mentioned it refers.

An important matter which has been referred to is in regard to the sweating of men. The hon. Member said that under the contract system men were sweated. Well, my answer to that is, if that be so there can be nothing more to Lord Penrhyn's disadvantage and nothing to which he would more strongly object. If there has been sweating it has been of the men by the men. What has happened may have been that contractors have compelled their quarrymen to return to them a portion of the wages fixed by Lord Penrhyn as payment for the work. Although I have no right to speak on Lord Penrhyn's behalf I will take upon myself to say that if any one can show to him a better way than that at present existing to stop workmen from cheating their fellow workmen, he will be the first to welcome it and adopt it. What is the objection to the contract system? It is not that it conduces to sweating. The bargain system is at least as open to the risk of sweating as the contract system. The objection to the contract system is that it is a labour saving system, that it means the more economical working of the quarry, and that fewer men can get the same amount of money out of the quarry. Then the conduct of the strikers has been referred to, and I am not going to reflect on them. Of course I can well understand that they were sorely tempted to break the law, and some of them did break the law. They were not angels, but I do not think they behaved very badly in the circumstances. I think there were fifty-six convictions for assault during the last three years. Undoubtedly there was serious terrorism practised against the non-union men. Those men have had a miserable life, and their wives and children have suffered from it, and I sympathise most heartily with Lord Penrhyn in his determination that under no circumstances will he sacrifice the men who have stood by him for the men who have fought against him. To be chivalrous and forgiving is one thing, and to betray your friends to suit your enemies is a thing I cannot sympathise with.

I shall leave Lord Penrhyn now and refer to the Board of Trade, which is ostensibly the subject of this Motion. Let us see what their duty was. We are asked, why did not the Board of Trade inquire and report. I consider that it would be a monstrous abuse of my right hon. friend's position if, in the face of the fact that the House deliberately considered the proposal and rejected it he had used the Conciliation Act for the purpose of blackmail. That is the only use I can see that it could be put to here. The suggestion seems to be that the right hon. Gentleman ought to have sent down someone to inquire and to make a report. Then the hon. Member went on, in common with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to object to compulsory arbitration—as I do. Well, as to this Act. I do not say what I think of it. It reminds me of the Presbyterian Scotsman who got into low water and got a billet to swing the censer in a Roman Catholic Church in Malta; and as he was working his censer up and down he did so to the tune of "If it's daeing nae guid, it's daeing nae harm." That is exactly my idea of the Act. It is a sham. It never can be of any real use. Any occasion on which the Board of Trade might usefully intervene under the Act is when an Archbishop or retired judge could come down and put the matter straight. If the parties to a dispute do not come to terms without this Act, you cannot get them to do so under it. There has been an attempt in the debate to contrast unfavourably the action of the Board of Trade now and in 1896. The Board of Trade were children at the business in 1896. They did not know precisely what kind of Act it was. They thought they were going to effect a social revolution; that they were going to manage the whole trade of the country. They sailed gaily on and came to grief; and now they learn that when one side is determined not to have anything to do with the other, interference is useless, or worse than useless; that it is not a question of wages, whether the men should be paid 16s. or 18s. according to the higgling of the market; it is not a question whether the market for slates is rising or falling, and that 6d. should be taken off or added to wages, on which an outsider might come in, and with the parties met together, put the thing right. This is a case which the one side has got to win and the other lose. It is a case in which Lord Penrhyn says "black" and the men "white," and that no outsider can say is "grey" or any other colour. Mark, this is a point in favour of the Board of Trade. Lord Penrhyn asked the men at the beginning of the strike to meet him and discuss grievances; but they took no notice of it, and they do not do it now. They decline altogether to do so, because they consider that the recognition of the existence of the committee is a condition precedent to entering into any negotiation at all. Well, in these circumstances, how can you expect the Board of Trade to intervene? You must give a discretion to a Government Department. [AN HON. MEMBER: You must give them common sense.] To give them sense is beyond my power. You must give them discretion, and if you deprive them of discretion, and say that they must go into every dispute between employer and employed—whether they would do any good or not—all I can say is that I wish my right hon. friend to get out of his present office as soon as he can.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I do not know that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will appreciate the defence of his Department made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Albans. The policy of the hon. Gentleman appears to have reached its full development, its highest stature, when it reached the idea of doing nothing. The early phase of the Act in which it was believed that something could be done, apparently belonged to a time the merits of which the hon. Member deprecated. But whatever may be the merits of the hon. Member's speech in defence of the action of the Board of Trade, there was another point of view which was interesting, and which the hon. Member painted for us—a picture of the facts, not as they are, but as presented in the minds of the friends of Lord Penrhyn. If there is one thing which the hon. Member's speech has brought out more distinctly than another, it is the necessity of supplying to this House and to the public some impartial and accurate record of these facts, on which public opinion may be brought to bear. The hon. Member has given full credit to the intentions of Lord Penrhyn. I believe the noble Lord to be a high-minded gentleman, although at the same time I think he is actuated by an altogether, I might almost say—I do not wish to use an offensive term—ridiculous view of the issue involved in the controversy between him and his men. I do not wish to judge Lord Penrhyn on fragmentary quotations from his statements. I could quote with as deadly effect from these as from any made by his men; but I have here the shorthand notes of the conference between Lord Penrhyn and the representatives of his men on 18th March, 1897, when Mr. Young, on behalf of Lord Penrhyn, put forward views which go far beyond those attributed to him by the hon. Member for St. Albans as the definition of quarry management. It seems to me that Lord Penryhn at this conference had a most confused notion as to what the issue was. Mr. Williams said he wished to ask—

> "I take it that the recognition of a Committee is denied to us?"

And Lord Penrhyn replied:—

> "The recognition of a Committee which attempts to interfere with the management—that is what is denied you."

Then the representative of the men goes on to say—

> "We, on our side, wish to have a Committee which would be authorised to receive complaints, and we pointedly stated that we have no intention at all of interfering with the management."

Then Mr. Williams goes on to say that—

> "The prosperity of the last twelve years in my opinion is not inconsistent with the fact that the men have grievances. I gather from the fact of the men continuing to remain out for such a length of time, although during that time they have been offered work on three different occasions, that it is a proof that they have grievances, and that the mode by which they were to convey these grievances to the management was not acceptable to the men. Now that the men are asking for a committee to submit those grievances, I fail to see why they should not have it. Would it be too much to ask your lordship to define the limits where the interference with the management comes in?"

Then there was a long discussion, and finally there came out this significant fact. The men asked Mr. Young, who spoke on behalf of Lord Penrhyn, whether it was not true that his lordship objected to trade unions at all; and that he quite frankly admitted. Then there was asked a question when the answer was that the difference between the management and the men was that the managers objected to the union and would not recognise it in any way whatever. And the men asked, "Is not that so?" And Mr. Young said, "We will not recognise the union in any way." I am not imputing carelessness to Lord Penrhyn or Mr. Young in any sense, but I protest against a fragmentary portion of the views of the men being put forward, as showing that the men have been speaking in an unreasonable fashion. If ever there was a dispute in which we should have some one who could come in between the two parties to a dispute with a view of ascertaining the real and true issue this is such a case. This is, as the right hon. Gentleman said, in beginning the debate, a serious question for which to censure the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade said that there were only 3,000 men involved and therefore that it was not a dispute of great magnitude; but I know of no controversy which has written itself more deeply in the public imagination than this wretched, miserable, squabble which has reduced a whole country side to a state of destitution, and no step can be more justified than that which the Opposition have taken, which may possibly have the effect of bringing about a better state of things in regard to this unhappy dispute.

*MR. LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington): Is it denied that ever since August 1897 the men can submit any grievance to the management through a deputation representing all the employees, and freely elected by them. I understand from what my hon. friend has said——

*MR. SPEAKER. Order, order. This is going beyond the limits of an interruption.

*MR. HALDANE: I will tell the hon. Gentleman how the answer to that point strikes me. I have endeavoured, with all the assiduity I could, to get at the real facts. That point came under discussion in the negotiations between Sir Edward Clarke and the junior counsel representing the men. Lord Penrhyn in his evidence said that there was no question outstanding except the question of the Quarry Committee. Thereupon Sir Edward Clarke did what he could to bring the parties together, and it looked as if the dispute were reduced to this—How many men Lord Penrhyn was to take back. I do not say that Lord Penrhyn pledged himself; but it appears from the correspondence that the matter reduced itself to this—How many men could Lord Penrhyn afford to take back? As regards the point to which the hon Gentleman alludes, Sir Edward Clarke, at any rate, thought that that had been got over. Then there is a hiatus, and a final letter from Sir Edward Clarke after he had again seen Lord Penrhyn in which he regrets he can do nothing further in the matter. Therefore, I am not in a position to answer the hon. Gentleman's question; but the fact remains that the negotiations with Sir Edward Clarke showed that the men were prepared to accept any arrangement which they could accept with loyalty to those who had maintained their cause. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman appeared to be that it was impossible for the Board of Trade to continue intervening in this matter. The first consideration on which he founded that proposition was, however, rather unfortunate, because he alluded to the intervention of the Board of Trade in 1897. The lock-out occurred in September 1896, and in October the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, then President of the Board of Trade, opened up communication with Lord Penrhyn. There were letters from the right hon. Gentleman and also from Sir Courtenay Boyle. Then there came a point when Lord Penrhyn and the Board of Trade were at issue. The Board of Trade proposed a meeting at which one of their representatives should be present. Lord Penrhyn objected to that on the ground that it meant an interference with his private affairs. Did the Board of Trade give the matter up? Not at all; because in the February following the right hon. Gentleman wrote to Lord Penrhyn, and referred to a request of the men to have an interpreter and a shorthand writer at a meeting, in order that they might have a record of what took place. That meeting took place; and although it did not at the moment lead to the determination of the lock-out, it was so fruitful that in three or four weeks the parties came so near an understanding, the facts became so much more intelligible, and the issues so much smaller, that the lock-out terminated. That was a very creditable result from the intervention of the Board of Trade in 1896 and 1897. I only wish the right hon. Gentleman who now occupies the position of President of the Board of Trade had in the same fashion taken his life in his hands.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I must differ from the right hon. Gentleman as to the result which he attributes to the intervention of the Board of Trade.

*MR. HALDANE: I am relying on the shorthand notes and on the sequence of events. I cannot dive into the motives which moved Lord Penrhyn, but it seems to me that the intervention of the Board of Trade was at that time fruitful. But I go further. The Act of Parliament enjoined on the Board of Trade the duty of taking such steps as could be taken to put the public in possession of full information with regard to such matters when they were of sufficient importance. The Act of 1896 expressed a policy which for the future was to be the policy of the Board of Trade. It gave to the Board of Trade in definite terms a certain power; and when power was given in that fashion it represented one of the matters which was within the ordinary competence of the Board of Trade. That power was given under two sections of the Act of 1896—in not only the main section, but also in the fifth section, which provides that the Board of Trade is from time to time to present to Parliament a Report of its proceedings under the Act. The Act gave the Board of Trade power, on the application of either party to a trade dispute, to appoint a conciliator, and the duty of the conciliator is to inquire into the cause and circumstances of the difference, to endeavour to bring about a settlement, and to report to the Board. The Board is then in a position to inquire further if it is so disposed; but, at any rate, it has to present a Report of the proceedings to Parliament, the object being that Parliament should be in possession of material to enable it to judge whether the officials of the Board of Trade had done their duty in the matter, and also to enable public opinion to form a judgment. Suppose that course had been taken in this case? I is no answer to say that the situation looked difficult. I know that Lord Penrhyn is a single individual, and that he is a person of strong views; but I believe that his views rest on nothing irrational in his mind. The right hon. Gentleman has dealt with Mr. Pierpont Morgan; surely he could likewise negotiate with Lord Penrhyn. It was open to him to send down someone of sufficient position to ask Lord Penrhyn for an interview, which Lord Penrhyn could not refuse, and who could put before Lord Penrhyn the views which occurred to an outsider who had familiarised himself with the facts. Who could possibly say that the result of that intervention might not alter Lord Penrhyn's view, and might not have a very considerable effect in bringing himself and the men together, and in the men putting their wishes in a form more agreeable to Lord Penrhyn. I myself feel that it is impossible to say that the best is being done by a policy of doing nothing. I think the President of the Board of Trade would have been in a better position if he could have said that he had done his very best, rather than to come down to the House and say he had done nothing for fear he should get a snub. I entirely agree with my right hon. friend that it is perfectly impossible for any one to predict beforehand what the result would be of the appointment of a conciliator of ability, personality and commanding position, who would be able to approach the two parties. For my part, I leave this matter with the regretful feeling that we are face to face with a struggle which has gone on for a great many years, which has resulted in what seems to me to be a distorted view of the facts, and which leaves a condition of things which demands strong, determined and definite steps. These steps mean the pursuance of the policy of the Act of 1896, regardless of the question whether it would succeed or fail. Far better it should fail, far better that this House should fail after it had done its best to terminate this lamentable dispute, than that we should sit here confessing our impotence. Far better it should fail than that we should be in the position we are to-day. I feel that if this House resists this Motion, and fails to express its opinion of what ought to be done, it will be in a position no better than that of the Ministry itself.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I was for many years, in the capacity of trustee, responsible for the employment of 2,000 men in a colliery. As the sole surviving trustee the responsibility which falls upon Lord Penrhyn fell upon my shoulders, and I do not hesitate to say that Lord Penrhyn, throughout all these proceedings, has conducted himself like a generous and just man, anxious to do justice all round. Some reference has been made to the fact that the Board of Trade in the year 1896 pursued a different course from that which has been pursued this year. I say that the Board of Trade in 1896 made a huge blunder. Attempts were made to approve the interference of a public Department in a dispute when it was perfectly well known that one of the parties to the dispute strongly objected to the interference. On that occasion the Board of Trade was further handicapped by the fact that it relied largely on a labour correspondent's report. It was proved that the labour correspondent, who was supposed to impartially represent to the Board of Trade what was going on at Bethesda, was an ardent supporter of trades unions, who had, as he himself said, taken the chair at a meeting in connection with the strike, and had said his sympathies were entirely with the men. That was, I think, a great public scandal; that a man who held an official position, and had to make an official report to the Board of Trade should be an avowed partisan, and engaged in carrying on an agitation on behalf of one particular branch. What is Lord Penrhyn's objection? Some talk about it as an objection to all combination of the men. It is nothing of the kind. He objects to the committee because the committee avowedly in their own minutes declare their intention of driving out of the employment of Lord Penrhyn every man who has not seen eye to eye with themselves. That is to say, they are avowedly going to hunt out every man who has been loyal to his employer. I think it is a scandal that men who have conducted themselves in such a manner should be aided and abetted by the Opposition in an endeavour to get back those positions which they used so tyrannically before. They say themselves in their minutes that it is resolved to universally exact payment to the union. They are merely touts for the union fund, and that is the impartial committee, a committee representing union and non-union men! They are mere touts for collecting funds for the strike. They also resolved to obtain before the next committee meeting the names of all those who refused to pay the union subscriptions. To ask Lord Penrhyn, after all his experience of the mischief which this committee has brought about, to allow it to be reappointed is a monstrous proposition. It may be said that this committee might put the views of the men in a sentence to Lord Penrhyn, but they passed a resolution, so recently as 1879, which has never been repealed—and to give these men their due they do not deny that their real aim is to reconstitute this committee—in which they resolved that the bad workmen who had got into a better bargain by being loyal to their employer during the strike were to be removed back to their own class. It is like saying that a sergeant in the Army, having been promoted by his superiors because he did not agree with the opinions of a strike committee, should be reduced to the ranks. The result of that to those men would be less pay and rougher work. They also resolved that if the new men who came in after the strike were in good bargains and some of the old men had not been replaced, that the new men should be removed to make room for the old. I never heard of a more monstrous interference with labour in my life. Sir, if Lord Penrhyn was inclined to listen for a moment to such a scandalous suggestions he would receive the reprobation of all men. So far from following the right hon. Gentleman in saying that the President of the Board of Trade ought to have repeated the mistake which had been made by his predecessor years ago, I say I think he has done more wisely in avoiding placing himself in a very false position. The right hon. Gentleman has avoided all matters of a personal character, but he cannot get away from the fact that if Lord Penrhyn allowed the reconstitution of this committee to interfere in his business, he might as well go to the Bankruptcy Court. It has already done an immense amount of harm and it would be dangerous to restore it.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): It is always refreshing to have the intervention of the hon. Gentleman opposite in our debates. We are always sure to get the history, ancient history, of the question. He never minces matters. He told us something that happened, as he says, so recently as 1879. If he will allow me to say so, he has not moved with the times.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I said the resolution was passed in 1879 and was never rescinded.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I do not wish to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman, but he used the expression "so recently as 1879." 1879 cannot be described as very recent in trades union affairs in this country. The right hon. Gentleman also gave a high certificate to Lord Penrhyn's personal character. He seemed prejudiced against trades unions, and treated us with the old familiar phrases with regard to agitators which are rather ancient and threadbare arguments at this time of day. I am not going to follow any hon. Member into the details of this dispute, there are many about me who are much better acquainted with them than I am, but I entirely associate myself with the hon. and learned Member for Haddington. We want more light on this matter. The very fact that power has been given to the Board of Trade to investigate and report on matters of this kind is an argument in favour of this Motion. We want more knowledge of the details. What is the real issue between Lord Penrhyn and the men now it has been so narrowed by the most commendable exertions of Sir Edward Clarke to bring the thing to a conclusion?

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: An interference which was entirely unauthorised and officious.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I am sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that. Sir Edward Clarke did his best to bring a most deplorable struggle to an end. What is the real issue? The real issue between Lord Penrhyn and the men is whether the men shall have a right of combination. [Cries of "No!"] I speak as an employer of labour, and know what combination is. The issue is whether these men should have the free right of combination, and whether they should be able to present their cases through persons in whom they have confidence. A sentence has been read from a letter of Lord Penrhyn's saying he would not recognise the committee. I entered commercial life with a very strong prejudice indeed against trades unions, but I was slowly and surely convinced as to their utility, and I think now there is no surer means of maintaining peace and concord than a strong trades union. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us in his Budget speech that although there had been friction recently there had been very few trade disputes, because the men have been organised, and have been able to meet in an authoritative manner their employers and settle matters in dispute. On the last occasion when this matter was before the House, I remember a striking sentence that was read by the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire; it was used by the Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee of the Carnarvonshire County Council.

> "With an experience of thirty-three years he would by meeting the men in friendly intercourse have settled the point at issue in half an hour."

That is what we want—the disposition to do that. So long as Lord Penrhyn refuses to recognise the principle of combination he is standing in the way of a settlement. There can be no question about that. I would undertake to say that if I were conducting a factory, or a railway, or any other industrial concern, I could clip the wings of any committee that was appointed and render their efforts null and void. I am afraid that what is at the bottom of this is some misconception as to the real rights of property. That is a very delicate matter. I am all for individual ownership of property. You cannot do without the incentive which individual ownership gives. But let us remember the words of Mr. Drummond, the only Englishman who ever governed Ireland successfully, that "property has its duties as well as its rights." I believe that property was made for man, not man for property. I do not think that men come into the world to delve for gold, coal, slates, or what not; I believe that these commodities were made by Providence and placed in the ground for our use, but they are to be got from the bowels of the earth always with regard to the rights of humanity. Humanity comes first. What is Lord Penrhyn's attitude towards the public? Nothing the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has said displaces that cogent sentence quoted by my right hon. friend the Member for East Fife—

> "I will not tolerate an official letter from the Board of Trade or outside interference in my private property."

and nothing has displaced that very remarkable sentence which no doubt was written on the instructions of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply—

> "That the Board of Trade could not recognise for a single moment that it was his private property."

We are dealing now not with the President of the Board of Trade, but with the Government. This is a vote of censure, proposed with all due formality, on the Government. The Cabinet in its collective capacity is responsible. I am strongly of opinion that the case has been made out. I think the First Lord of the Treasury will no longer maintain that this is a matter of mere local interest. It goes far deeper than that. The principles involved will not be laid to rest for many a day. No one is doing a more dangerous thing than Lord Penrhyn in raising the questions here involved. It is a most serious and grave matter. I hold that we should not be doing our duty if, when these circumstances have arisen, and Parliament has given this power to a Government Department, we did not express in the strongest and clearest terms our disapprobation of that Government Department for not having done their best to bring to an end the present condition of things.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): As I listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite I could not help wondering by what magic the Members of the Opposition had laid the spirits of those at whose shrines the Liberal Party were wont to worship. What has become of the shades of all the political economists of the Manchester school? What a bonfire has been made of all their once sacred works in order that the right hon. Gentleman might warm his hands before taking up his pen to indite the resolution which he to-night asks us to accept! I have always thought that the principle and the object of the Manchester School was to restrict to the utmost degree Government interference with any industry. What has become of those views which used to be regarded as the purest type of Liberal orthodoxy? This resolution is merely a political manœuvre of the most transparent character, designed partly to occupy a little time, and partly to catch a few stray Socialist votes for a party which stands sadly in need of them. I must say that the right hon. Gentleman, in associating himself with this Resolution, is seeking to turn the work of Parliament and of the Government—to use the words of a great writer, recently a Member of this House

> "Into something little better than a competition of class bribery, and thus lower the tone of public life and the character and influence of public men."

I am at one with hon. Members opposite is deploring the continuance of this industrial dispute, but I part company with them on the Resolution. So far as it is a vote of censure on the Government for not putting in force the law of the land I shall leave the matter to be dealt with by the Ministers themselves. I turn to the circumstances of the case, which are declared to be so grave as to justify the Motion before the House, and I ask the House to consider what is the state of affairs at Bethesda with which the Government is called upon drastically to deal. What is the cause of that condition of affairs? What is there in the conduct of Lord Penrhyn as an employer in relation to his men to justify this proposed arbitrary intervention between employer and employed? My object is to ensure, as far as possible, that Members shall be in possession of the true facts before they vote on the question. The right hon. Gentleman opposite is a master of phrases, and I noticed he was very careful to avoid the use of such words as "tyrant," "tyranny," "oppressor," and so forth, but all those words have been heaped on Lord Penrhyn in the past, both in this House and on hundreds of platforms in the country, and even in the pulpits of the land. He has been the object of the most violent denunciation and abusive obloquy. But although the right hon. Gentleman did not use those words, I think he intended to convey the impression that Lord Penrhyn as an employer of labour was harsh and tyrannical. That, however, is the very issue that was tried a short time ago in the courts of law. Lord Penrhyn recently brought an action for libel, which action was tried before the Lord Chief Justice and a special jury in London, so that it was absolutely independent of the parties to the dispute and of local circumstances. The principal counsel for the defence was the hon. and learned Member for South Shields, and I am sure the defendant could not have had a more brilliant advocate. The hon. and learned Member made a speech, as violent as it was eloquent, in support of the plea of justification, and he defined the whole issue as being that of the conduct of Lord Penrhyn as an employer merely, and not as to his character in any other relation whatever. The issue which the hon. and learned Member invited the jury to consider was whether or not Lord Penrhyn was a tyrant. He said—

> "I come back again to the question, what is the subject of the libel? What is at the foundation and bottom of it? It is a charge against Lord Penrhyn that he was hard, harsh,

oppressive, and unjust, in some of his most important relations with the men employed at his quarry. That is the charge that is called tyrannical. He is called a tyrant in relation to them."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Lord Chief Justice declined to accept that issue.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I have quoted the words of the hon. and learned Member in which he laid that issue before the jury, and what did the jury say? They decided that the charge of being hard, harsh, oppressive, and unjust, was untrue, in fact, that it was disproved by the evidence; they rejected the contention that the allegations were made honestly and without malice; they found a verdict for Lord Penrhyn, and awarded him the substantial damages of £500. After that verdict I think the denunciation of Lord Penrhyn in this House ought to cease. I will go further. I now challenge any hon. Member to stand up and name one single example of hardness, harshness, or injustice on the part of Lord Penrhyn? That is a bold challenge to make after Lord Penrhyn's conduct has been the subject of severe criticism for several years past in the country and of five days examination in a court of law. What is the state of affairs at Bethesda? What is the state of affairs at present? The right hon. Gentleman drew a picturesque description which would be applicable to any strike and to any circumstances and place. In 1896 there was a strike, after eleven years of prosperity which was shared alike by the employers and the men. During that time Lord Penrhyn raised the wages of the men three times, and in 1897 that strike was subjected to a debate in this House. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that the result of that debate was that the strike came to an end, but it was nothing of the kind. This House refused to intervene, and consequently the strike came to an end in the only way in which it ought to come to an end, and that was by direct amicable agreement between the parties. Let me deal with what, after all, is the crux of the whole question. I think hon. Members who know anything about the facts of this case will ask what is really Lord Penrhyn's character as an employer. Is it true that he has resisted the right of combination? The last speaker insisted that Lord Penrhyn had resisted the right of combination amongst his men. Is it true that Lord Penrhyn resists trades unions? If he were really resisting the right of combination, there are a large number of hon. Members of this House who would think him unreasonable and unjust, and I should be amongst them. I regard the right and power of labour to combine as absolutely essential to the safety of labour, because unless they have such right and power, whether they exercise it or not labour would become dangerously at the mercy of capital. Not that I suggest that capital and labour are hostile and opposed to each other. I suggest nothing of the kind, for they are absolutely dependent the one upon the other, and the man who would seek to set them at variance is the enemy of both. I hold, therefore, that the right to combine is absolutely essential to the safety of labour. But that question is not at issue. If that is so, it may be asked why Lord Penrhyn objects to a committee. That is the real crux and difficulty of the whole matter. It is suggested by the right hon. Gentleman who moved this Motion that the committee is only a vehicle and medium for the forwarding of grievances, and that it is the means of preventing unfounded grievances being put before the employer. The hon. Member opposite spoke of it as working well. I may explain that the word "committee" means something quite different in Bethesda than here. This is not a question of committee, and it is not a trades union committee. If they would call it a trades union committee there would be no difficulty. But this is a quarry committee, and it claims to represent all the men in the quarry. There are union and non-union men in that quarry working side by side, and the non-union men, I am sure the House will agree, are entitled to protection as well as the others. There was a committee abolished in 1885, which existed for eleven years, and during that time it claimed to represent all the men in the quarry, union and non-union alike. It had been agreed that the committee should be the sole means of forwarding the complaints to the managers, and it was presumed that they would forward complaints impartially from all the men in the quarries. The resolution they passed on the 2nd of December, 1874, was as follows:—

> "That no complaint be received except from one who is a member of the union."

This committee, which claims to represent the whole of the men really only represented the union men, and it was an instrument for forcing non-union men to join the union. Under that committee a non-union man could not forward his complaint to his employer, however just that complaint might be. I hold that every man should have the right to forward a complaint to his employer, and that is the position of Lord Penrhyn to-day. To show that this committee was a mere instrument of the trades union to force the non-union men to join I will quote the following resolutions passed by the Committee:—

> "Resolved to exhort regular and unfailing payment to the union."
>
> "Resolved that the union money be received every Thursday evening after the payment in the quarry."
>
> "Resolved to obtain for the next committee meeting the names of those who refuse to pay the union and that the representative adopt the most secret method for doing so."
>
> "Resolved to adhere to the union rules in the case of Griffith Jones."
>
> "Resolved to urge the partners to influence the 'journeymen' to pay the union and appoint two men to be with each book to interview those who do not pay."

This committee claimed to represent all the men in the quarry, and as a matter of fact it only represented the union men and refused to allow the complaints of the non-union men to be forwarded to the employers. The union brought pressure to bear upon those men who did not pay, and on those grounds alone Lord Penrhyn would be justified in abolishing the committee, as he did in the year 1885. For eleven years after that the quarry worked well both for employers and employed alike. The quarry committee interfered with the management to such an extent, and so disastrously that, in the first place, it was said that practically the quarry was managed by the committee and not the owner. The fact was that this magnificent property and this splendid industry was reduced absolutely to the verge of bankruptcy. The right hon. Gentleman said that in 1885 Lord Penrhyn succeeded in abolishing the quarry committee. But it is not correct. In 1885, the late Lord Penrhyn was the owner, and he was over eighty years of age, and quite unfitted to deal with the difficulties of the situation, and the men took full advantage of his infirmity. The quarry was galloping along to ruin, and to prevent it going bankrupt Lord Penrhyn called in his son, the present owner, to manage the quarry.

MR. BELL (Derby): I should like the hon. Member to give us some example of interference with the management of the quarry.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I will give some instances. In the first place they interfered with the letting of bargains. They resolved to revise the quarry rules. I think hon. Members will agree that the rules of the quarry are matters for the managers to determine. [AN HON. MEMBER: "No, no."] I will give another example. They passed a resolution interfering with the salaries paid to the officials of the quarry. The committee claimed that the salaries of the officials were too high and they objected. I will give one more example. They suggested that when a man had three months holiday when he came back again he should have his bargain waiting for him. Was it reasonable that any man should attempt to manage any business, whether a quarry or a large works, employing 2,000 or 3,000 men and allow a man to take three months holiday and find his work waiting for him when he came back? I claim that I have shown that the quarry committee did interfere with the management and also with the liberty of the non-union men. I claim that Lord Penrhyn was justified in 1885 in abolishing the quarry committee, and I claim that he is justified to-day in saying that nothing would now induce him to allow that committee to be restored. That is the committee which the strikers are now trying to re-establish in its old position and power, and that is what Lord Penrhyn will never consent to recognise. I should like to read Lord Penrhyn's own evidence given at the recent trial. At the end of one day and a half in the witness box, he was asked the following questions—

> "906. The Lord Chief Justice: After all your experience would you just state to the jury, without any question from me, what is the position or action of the committee to which you object, because it is important with regard to many questions put to you by Mr. Robson?
>
> "Lord Penrhyn: What I object to very much is their claiming to speak for the whole body of men, when they do not represent the whole body of men—that is the first point. I felt that the non-unionist men were placed at a very great disadvantage in consequence of the line of the union men, and I felt it was my duty as an employer of labour to stand up for the rights of free labour, and I have done my best in that way.
>
> "907. The Lord Chief Justice: Does that feeling exist, not only in 1885, but right up to the present time?—Yes right up to the present time.
>
> "907. The Lord Chief Justice: Is there anything else in connection with what you describe as the 'quarry committee' which you object to, and which you want to mention to the jury, or is that simply your whole statement?"
>
> "Lord Penrhyn: I do not think there is anything else, my lord. If I might be allowed to say one word it is this: that no such body as the quarry committee is recognised or tolerated in any of the other large slate quarries in North Wales.
>
> "The Lord Chief Justice: I understood that to be quite clear."

Let me just quote the Lord Chief Justice. In his direction to the jury he said:

> "Then finally when I asked him at the end of his evidence, he said: 'I objected to the quarry committee because I was convinced, and still am, that it did not fairly represent the non-unionists, and I felt it my duty as an employer of labour to protect the freedom of labour. Now Mr. Parry knows as much about this quarry, probably, as anybody living. He has been secretary of these various organisations for the period of something like thirty years; he is in Court and hears Lord Penrhyn give that evidence; not only is no question put in cross-examination to Lord Penrhyn but Mr. Parry goes in and out of the box without suggesting for a moment that Lord Penrhyn had formed a wrong conclusion."

They interfered to the detriment and injury of the non-union men, with the result, as I say, that the quarry was nearly reduced to bankruptcy. The point to which I draw attention is this. It will be remembered that in 1900 the men left their work without giving any notice or reason, and although they have been repeatedly invited to give a reason or to put forward a grievance they have never done so. This much is clear: that this dispute is not concerned with the question of wages. It is not concerned with the question of hours of labour, or the question of the recognition of the trades union. It is not concerned with the question of voluntary combination among the men, or any section of the men, so long as no section attempts to coerce another. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington quoted certain words used by Mr. Young as the manager of these works. He quoted Mr. Young as having said before the Royal Commission that he declined absolutely to have any dealings with the union. Mr. Young having had his attention called to that at an interview at some subsequent date said it was not according to the evidence to be found in the Blue-book. What Mr. Young said was that they declined absolutely to recognise the union in any way, but that they did not interfere with the men for being in the union. He said—

> "We take not the slightest notice either of politics or anything else. Every man is treated simply as a working man."

When asked "Without reference to his being a unionist or not?" he replied—

> "Perfectly impartial as to being a unionist or not."

I think the hon. Member for Haddington quite unintentionally misrepresented Mr. Young, and I only quote the evidence in justice to him. The position of Lord Penrhyn is that he insists on the right of every workman to address any complaint to the manager; he insists on his right to control the working of the quarries, and he refuses to dismiss 1,000 loyal, contented and satisfactory workmen, who are to-day employed by him in the quarry.

Now we are told that the Government ought to jump in and be guilty of two gross acts of injustice—one to the men and the other to the employer. I think such an interference, with the results it would entail, would have the effect of destroying all confidence in the employment of capital, and all security for the freedom of labour in every industry in the country. I have not time to deal with all the points to which I would like to refer, but I wish to say a word in regard to Lord Penrhyn's refusal to accept arbitration. Well, I admit fully, frankly, and unreservedly, the good intentions on the part of Sir Edward Clarke, but he entered on the negotiations without the knowledge of, or authority from Lord Penrhyn. There are certain matters on which Lord Penrhyn will accept the arbitration of no man. The first is as to the restoration of the quarry committee, and the second is the re-admission of all the men now on strike and the necessary removal or dismissal of those men who are now working. The terms submitted to Sir Edward Clarke and forwarded by him to Lord Penrhyn were absolutely impossible on that point and upon several others. What is Lord Penrhyn's attitude to-day in relation to the men on strike. He says—

> "My quarry is open to all who apply for work—unionist or non-unionist alike. I never have done, and I do not intend to do, anything to prevent my employees from becoming members of the union if they wish to do so. All that I stipulate is, that those men who do not wish to do so should be left free to exercise their own judgment without coercion or intimidation. The terms and conditions of labour at my quarry are as fair, and the wages as good as, if not better than, those of any quarry in North Wales. A thousand men and boys are working, and are perfectly happy and contented, and, until the requisite number is arrived at, I am ready to admit into the quarry any suitable man who will work there contentedly."

There is another very important question—What are the relations prevailing between Lord Penrhyn and the 1,000 men now working for him? The allegation is that Lord Penrhyn is a harsh employer of labour. Let me not give to the House my opinion. I will quote what is said to Lord Penrhyn by the 1,000 men now working for him. The language is plain and clear, and it is true. They unanimously voted this resolution and forwarded it to him—

> "We, the workmen in the Penrhyn Quarry, in mass-meeting assembled, beg to be allowed hereby to offer to your Lordship our respectful and cordial congratulations on the happy result of the recent trial. It is unnecessary to say that we, your Lordship's workmen, the great mass of whom have never worked under anybody else, and many of whom have been employed in the quarry for over fifty years, needed no verdict of a jury to demonstrate your Lordship's high personal honour, your open-handed generosity, and unswerving justice and fairness to all alike as an employer of labour, and your Lordship's noble munificence and kindly sympathy as a neighbour and friend to those in distress. All this we have known well, and felt with pride and gratitude all the years along. The verdict of the jury could change nothing. But it is to us a source of unmingled joy that, as a result of the trial heard before the Lord Chief Justice of England in the full publicity of the High Court, the outside public will henceforth know all these things as we do, and feel, therefore, as we feel, the enormity of the wrong done to your Lordship for months together. We earnestly hope that the future may be brighter and happier, and that your Lordship may be long spared to enjoy it."

This is the view of the 1,000 men now in employment, by which they are earning an average of 5s. 8d. a day, and many of them between 10s. and 11s. Peace and prosperity prevail, and to disturb this condition of things and to destroy these relations and dispossess these men the Government are called upon to invoke some undefined power or receive the censure of a momentarily united Opposition. Why are these men who are working to be dispossessed of their work and their homes? Why should they be dispossessed in order that agitators may make a vicarious atonement to their victims? The right hon. Gentleman can discard when it suits him all the principles of political economy, but he cannot get over the fundamental principle in the laws of mechanics that where a space is filled by one body you cannot put in another without dispossessing that which is already there. Agitators have striven to set men against men and have driven workmen from good work to starvation for all they cared, and these allies right hon. Gentlemen are adopting for the purpose of uniting the forces and restoring the fortunes of the great Liberal Party.

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

BETHESDA (INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th April], "That, in view of the grave social and public interests involved in the continuance of the industrial dispute at Bethesda, this House condemns the inaction of His Majesty's Government, and declares its opinion that prompt intervention on their part is imperative to arrive at a just and effectual settlement."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): This debate has at least proved that there is a great lack of information as to the rights and wrongs and facts of this controversy. I have listened to the President of the Board of Trade, and, although I was not very much impressed by his speech, I understood the chief ground for his refusal to intervene was that there was no great prospect of success. I heard the same phrase with regard to the case of Whitaker Wright. I can only say that if the right hon. Gentleman limits the action of the Board of Trade to those cases in which they are likely to be successful, he limits the action of his Department very much indeed. The whole matter comes to this, that Lord Penrhyn is a very obstinate man. One hon. Gentleman said he was out-of-date, but, however that may be, he has some feudal notions in his head as to how the owner of a business ought to conduct it. Lord Penrhyn said some time ago—

> "I possess the right to dismiss from my quarry any of my men without giving any reason."

Lord Penrhyn may own a quarry, but he does not own the men, and that is a fact he does not always bear in mind. The Conciliation Act is fairly clear on this matter, because in the second section it gives the Board of Trade a right to interfere if it thinks fit. The President of the Board of Trade is the person who is to be the judge of the fitness, I do not mean of his own capacity, but of his Department, to interfere. Now, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think it was no use to intervene in this business unless both the employer and the employed asked him to do so, but the Act, in Sub-section 2, clearly provides that the Board might intervene if either the employer or employed asked for intervention. That seems to show that, on the application of any party to the dispute, the Board of Trade ought to intervene. So that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, if it comes to anything, comes to this, that, as the employer is an obstinate man it is no use to intervene at all; but it was just in order to meet cases of this sort that this Act was passed. The President of the Board of Trade always regards the helplessness of his own Department, and is willing to limit the action of that Department as much as possible. And then, perhaps, he thinks that Lord Penrhyn is a badger with whom he cannot cope, and he thought that if he once began to intervene in cases like this he would always have to interfere, and the contemplation of this huge burden of work on his already over burdened shoulders compelled him to say that he would not place it upon his Department. Now, the hon. Member opposite has not rightly stated the facts in this case. He has not had the facts supplied to him on the highest authority, and I feel certain that I shall convince the House that he is not quite well-informed on certain matters that he gave to the House in the course of his speech.

The first, and one of the most important points of this case, is this—Whether the men are or are not anxious to restore what was called the old quarry committee. The hon. Member said that under the old régime there was a Quarry Commitee, but I would point out that under the old *régime*—1874 to 1885 — there was not a single strike, and that under the old *régime* the estate agent of the late Lord Penrhyn himself was the ultimate referee of all matters brought up by the committee. That could not do much harm. The Court of Appeal was the estate agent of Lord Penrhyn himself. Now just let me tell the House, if I may, what the men are asking for at this stage. The hon. Member went back to 1874 for some of his facts, but let us consider the situation as it is now. What do the men want? Do they want any part in the management of the quarry? Do they want to dictate to the management as to what it shall do? Nothing of the kind. These men now ask for a representative body of the workmen of their own selection to consider and represent grievances. This body is to have the power to appoint an executive committee which is to act for that purpose. They are asking for that committee to consider grievances, and even the workmen in the employ of a peer might consider the grievances of their fellows. To represent them is a different matter, but it would not be too much to say that under certain circumstances they might represent the grievances of their fellows. That is the committee they are asking for, and I submit to this House that that is a legitimate end. To consider the grievances and to represent them. Now the hon. Member for Macclesfield said that the men wanted three months' holiday. I should like to ask him what is his authority for saying that the men ever asked for three months' holiday.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: What I quoted was an assertion on the part of the committee, as it existed from 1874 to 1885, that the men ought to have that right.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: Will the hon. Member give me the date? I have, since his speech, spoken to a man who has worked in this quarry for fifty years, and on his authority I say my hon. friend is misinformed. He is equally misinformed when he says the men have ever interfered with the official salaries. The point we have to consider is whether the men were justified in 1900 in the action they took. One cause of the lock-out, or strike, in 1900 is fairly deep-seated in that locality. The President of the Board of Trade says this is simply a local affair; he is only able to deal with Imperial questions. But let me tell the right hon. Gentleman that, however local the case may be, justice is the same everywhere. If there is a large industrial unrest, in which he was justified in intervening on that ground, he is equally justified in intervening here. Twelve hundred houses empty—1,400 men gone away from the district. If he knew the men of Bethesda he would not say it was a mere local matter. It is a matter which deserves that he should do something to mitigate the hardships of these unfortunate men. Now one of the terms of the settlement of 1897 which Lord Penrhyn, or Mr. Young on his behalf, agreed with the men was—that they should take back the men. There were twenty-five men who had been on strike not taken back. That was a very great breach of the agreement. I think it was the hon. Member for St. Albans who gave us a definition of roguery and tyranny, and although those are hard words you cannot be surprised if, when two or three thousand men see twenty-five men prevented from going back to their employment they should be somewhat disturbed. Mr. Young told Mr. Williams that they would take all the men back, and asked Mr. Williams to come and see him in six months and tell him if they had not been taken back. In six months Mr. Williams went to Mr. Young and told him that twenty-five men were not taken back, and then he was told that some were old and inefficient, and some had been convicted of poaching—one of the greatest offences under the law in some parts of the country, and were therefore not fit to be taken back into the quarry. A curious thing is that some of these men who were old and inefficient men have become more efficient since, although they have not got younger. I do not know why, but I know that under the new *régime*, when the strikers were on strike, these people were taken back to the quarry. Now that was not the only thing. These men wanted, during the dinner hour, a right to conversation, if not meeting. Now Mr. Young takes a strong view on this matter. He thinks that the men should either work, or eat, or sleep. Those are his own words. Now they were allowed to meet during their dinner hour these strikers who had gone back in order to dispossess the old men, but one of the grievances in the old time was that they were not allowed to meet at that time.

Another grievance of which they complained was one which I will term victimisation. This is a gentler word than those which the hon. Member for St. Albans used, though in the end it no doubt means the same thing. When Lord Penrhyn came into possession in 1885 he said any deputation that came to him must be composed of unionists and non-unionists. The first deputation which went to him was composed of six men, three of each. But the three unionists had notice of suspension, while the three non-unionists served on the deputation with the greatest composure without being suspended. That alarmed the quarrymen. They saw it put a premium on non-unionists in the quarry. Something has been said by the hon. Member for Macclesfield about Lord Penrhyn's attitude towards unionists and non-unionists and he read a letter upon that subject. I asked him to read three or four lines further, and if he had done so he would have found that Mr. Young to-day says that they will not recognise the union in any way whatever. This is the difference between unionists and non-unionists—the non-unionist thinks that union is not strength but weakness; the unionists think they should have a committee to represent them, while the non-unionists require nothing of the kind. That is the policy of victimisation, and that sank very deeply into the minds of the quarrymen. The same thing happened in 1897, when four men were dismissed from the quarry, the first being Mr. W. R. Evans, the chairman of the committee. He had worked for Lord Penrhyn for fifty-two years. He was over seventy years of age, and one day he had notice to go and see Mr. Young at the office. This old man walked five miles to see Mr. Young, and when he got there Mr. Young's treatment of him was this—he did not ask for any explanation, he simply said to him, "You must remember this, I have a right to dismiss anybody I like in this quarry, and you are dismissed." Is it any wonder that there is some bitterness against the man who works in that way against the man who has served in the quarry for over fifty-two years? Robert Davis, another member of the committee, was dismissed, and no explanation given. And the two others were dismissed for slight breaches of the Explosives Act, which would have been taken no notice of but for the fact that they were members of the committee. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that that is the right way to conduct a business of this kind? He says he thinks the Board of Trade is the worst conciliator in the world.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, sir; what I said was that of all the conciliators to deal with Lord Penrhyn the conciliator of the Board of Trade was likely to be the least successful.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH: He says in a case of this kind that of all possible conciliators the Board of Trade was the worst.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, the least likely to succeed.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH: Then they are surely the worst if they are least likely to succeed. I should not think the right hon. Gentleman would imagine that the worst were the most likely to succeed. What is the present position in the quarry? Many Members of the House heard the hon. Member opposite read that glorious resolution which he read. It has rarely been my lot to hear such a resolution read in this House. These workmen must indeed be very ill men when they can turn round in the manner in which they have after such a resolution as that. Lord Penrhyn has a very high opinion of his workmen, because when he is asked to allow an interpreter and shorthand writer for the use of his workmen he turns round and says he can take one from among the workmen themselves. I do not know who drafted that resolution, or whether it was inspired, but these men ought indeed to be happy men. Some of them have been shut out of the quarry for fifteen years, and they have now got back. Some of them have been convicted of offences which were a bar to their ever being taken back into the quarry. Now it is said, let them all come in, provided they are not convicted of trades unionism. Public meetings in the dinner hour are allowed, and the committee—we have heard a good deal about the committee, but there is a committee in the quarry now—of, I do not call them blacklegs, but men who have gone in during the strike. The men are now ready to go back under the 1889 settlement. There is only one point for which they stand out. They think that when the labourers have grievances the labourers should be allowed to send representatives to explain their grievances. All the men ask is this, that men in that position should be able to have some authority to speak for them. Is not that a reasonable thing? These men, without exception, are monoglot Welshmen. On one occasion when a deputation came to Mr. Young there was an interpreter, but he was the defendant against whom they had appealed. In that case there were the labourers, who only spoke Welsh, and the interpreter, the man against whom they were appealing, had to interpret the charge against himself. The men have done their best to settle and end this dispute. They have offered to have the matter referred to the Prime Minister, to Lord Rosebery, to the Colonial Secretary, or to any man who was denominated. That shows the fairness of their case. The hon. Member for Macclesfield, in the course of his speech, said, in regard to Sir Edward Clarke's settlement, that the moment Lord Penrhyn heard of the affair going on he at once put a stop to it.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: No; I said he protested.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH: What is the plain state of the matter? It is that the hon. Member has either made a serious charge against Sir Edward Clarke, which he will adhere to, or which, on further consideration, he will, and I think he will, withdraw. Here is a letter dated on the 31st of March from Sir Edward Clarke to Mr. Williams with whom he carries on the negotiations for a settlement.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I have seen no correspondence except between Sir Edward Clarke and Lord Penrhyn.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH: Possibly that is so. If the hon. Member had, he would not have made the statement he did. The hon. Member's statement is that the moment Lord Penrhyn knew that there was anything on foot he at once protested. This is what Sir Edward Clarke said to Mr. Williams—

> "Dear Williams,—I communicated to Lord Penrhyn the memorandum of terms suggested as the basis of agreement, and your supplementary letter, and I have had the opportunity of explaining and discussing them with him both personally and in writing. He has consulted and is consulting others, and until he has had time to consider their opinions matters must be left at a standstill."

Was there ever a more gross misrepresentation of the facts of the case? Let me at once say that I acquit the hon. Member of any intention of misrepresentation.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Oh, if I had had that I should have made precisely the same statement.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH: If that is so, I will leave the hon. Member and Sir Edward Clarke to settle their own differences.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The intervention was wholly unauthorised.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITHS: That is not the point. The point is that Sir Edward Clarke opened up negotiations with Lord Penrhyn, and if Lord Penrhyn had acted as the hon. Member said he acted he would have at once said to Sir Edward Clarke, "I am extremely sorry that you have opened communications with the men, as I have made up my mind not to have anything to do with them." Instead of which Sir Edward Clarke says, "He has consulted, and is consulting others." It would be extremely interesting to know who the others are, and then we might know why this matter has not been settled. Lord Penrhyn, I submit, in this matter is entirely wrong, and I suggest that the right hon. Gentleman has it in his power to act as a conciliator in this matter. He has not done so, however, and the dispute has gone on for three years. I do not know whether he would have succeeded or not, but I say that it was his duty to attempt to succeed. He ought to have grappled with this question. He saw an industrial dispute going on for all this time, and he ought to have done his best to have made terms with one side or the other, and because he has failed to do so I shall certainly support the Motion.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): The last speaker who addressed the House has given a very interesting account which has, however, not decided the dispute, because the House must observe that there are two statements which have been made, in which there are not only controversies as to the facts, but disagreement as to the point of dispute. In the very few remarks I shall make, I do not intend to speak either as an advocate of Lord Penrhyn or of the quarrymen, though perhaps, as I once, years ago, enjoyed the hospitality of the quarrymen of Bethesda, I may be allowed to express my deep sympathy with the ruin and misery that has overtaken that once prosperous place. In my view, this is not a local but a national question.

National, not so much on account of the number of men employed, as on account of the very important public question which these disputes raise. So far as may be on one side or the other, I am content myself to accept the position taken up by the hon. Member for Glamorgan. The facts that are brought before the House obviously show that somebody is very greatly to blame. But I go further, and say that a national public Department of State, which represents the great bulk of the people, has not only the right to say that somebody is greatly to blame, but also the right, if they can, to find out who that somebody is, and to place the blame upon the proper person, whether it be Lord Penrhyn, or his agent, or the quarrymen. Therefore the House will apprehend that I profoundly agree with the speech made by the hon. and learned Member for Haddington, who claimed that in discussing a question of this kind the House of Commons ought to have before them, not merely the statements of advocates, however able and honest their statements might be, but they ought to also have before them the facts ascertained by some public authority, and what is more, some independent public authority, upon which this House could discuss matters, and upon which this House and public opinion could make up its mind as to the particular party who is to blame. The same sentiment was expressed by several hon. Members who addressed the House on the subject, namely, that we are in the dark. The last two speeches show us how in the dark we are when we find there are two representations of the issue which is before us. We ought to have a public, official, vouched-for, statement of facts on which to form an opinion. If it is true that the President of the Board of Trade has statutory power to make such an inquiry, and to lay such facts before the House, and that he has neglected to use those powers, then I should say that he deserved the censure of Parliament. But has he got such powers? I think his answer was complete upon that point. He first of all represented that an offer of conciliation by the Board of Trade had been rejected by Lord Penrhyn; about that there could not be any doubt whatever. Now, the offer of conciliation having been rejected, has the Board of Trade power to make proper and efficient inquiry? It is quite true that the Act of Parliament says that the President of the Board of Trade may make an inquiry, but as the right hon. Gentleman has pointed out, he is not to make a report, and with regard to the making of an inquiry, he cannot summon witnesses, examine books, or take evidence. The real power to make an inquiry is withheld from him, and the power given by Sub-section (a), Section 2, of the Act, is a perfectly illusory and ludicrous power. How are they to appoint a conciliator? Supposing some great and high person of great attainments is appointed conciliator? What could he do? His power under this Act is bounded by this. He is appointed to act as conciliator, to inquire into the facts and circumstances in the dispute by communication with the parties. He has no power to summon witnesses, to take evidence, or to examine documents, and he has only power to communicate. That would leave him entirely incapable of serving any useful purposes in inquiring into the circumstances of the case.

I thought the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade proved conclusively what had been said by the hon. Member for St. Albans—namely, that the Conciliation Act as it stands is a sham. I do not agree with the hon. Member who says it would do no harm. These sham Acts do a very great deal of harm, because they induce people to believe that an Act for the purposes of arbitration has been passed, and it takes six or seven years for the people to find out that the whole thing is a sham. I confess that if the Rules of this House permitted such a thing as a vote of censure which would censure both the Front Benches, I should be much inclined to support it. I do not know whether the House has forgotten the history of this question, but I have not. As long ago as 1875, the last Government of Mr. Gladstone, every year a Bill of Conciliation was brought in, and every year it was denounced by the Opposition of that day as a sham. When it was last brought in it was denounced firstly by my humble self, and secondly by a distinguished gentleman who supported me, namely, the present Colonial Secretary, who also declared that it was a sham. And then what happened? When the next Government came in, the predecessors of the present Government, they passed the present Conciliation Act, which was possibly even weaker and more feeble than that which they had denounced, and which the right hon. Member for Aberdeen had endeavoured to foist upon the House. Therefore, I am justified in saying that the blame must be equally shared by the two Front Benches. There are no means by which the award of an arbitrator can be enforced, and, therefore, compulsory arbitration has been very lightly and very generally discountenanced by all social reformers. But there is something a great deal short of compulsory arbitration, and that is the power for some Government authority to make inquiry and report. That was a thing perfectly possible to do. It is done in a great many countries, and the House of Commons having learned from this particular case how necessary it is that there should be facts on which the House could act, should strengthen the Conciliation Act by giving to the Board of Trade power not only to appoint a conciliator, but to call witnesses before him, to examine them upon oath, to inspect documents, and to make a report to the Board of Trade or to the House of Commons which would represent to the public what the true facts of the dispute were.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): It has been asserted by hon. Members that the quarry committee prevented free access to Lord Penrhyn of the non-union men. It was said that it only represented union men, and that then very properly Lord Penrhyn said he would never renew any agreement by which half his men would not have free access to him. If that was true I would agree to that view. I do not suppose any employer of labour in the kingdom would assent to anything which debarred half his men from bringing their complaints before him. But I would point out that nothing of the kind took place. What Lord Penrhyn wanted was that every man should approach him personally, or that he should get his next door neighbour who was a worker in the same class to do so. That was what he wanted to make every quarryman do. But half the quarrymen wanted another system. They did not interfere with non-union men who were willing to come individually to make their grievances known, and then simply because the committee said they represented only their own men Lord Penrhyn said the non-union men were debarred from having access to him. That was a most absurd fallacy. The fact was that Lord Penrhyn hit high and hit low. He said "We will not recognise you as you do not represent all the men," while the committee said they would be only too glad to represent them if he would allow them to do so. They agreed to go outside their constituency and to act for anyone who submitted any complaint to them. The position of the committee was this, that the owner or his agent is saved the trouble of dealing with the 101 petty complaints that are placed before the committee. The late chairman of the committee said himself—

> "If I took up every complaint brought to me, by either union or non-union men, I should be doing nothing all day long but trotting to and from the quarry office."

And that being so they disposed themselves of nine-tenths of the complaints made to them. These representations were never persisted in by the quarry committee from that day to this, so that the quarry committee never decided on a strike. The mere making of representations to the quarry manager cannot be said to be interfering with the management of the quarry. It is true that when the quarrymen's agent listens to a complaint which is unfounded, he tells the man that it is unfounded and it is one of the advantages of the quarry committee that nine-tenths of the complaints are stopped from going to the manager; but when a non-union man's complaint is stopped by the committee, that man goes himself to the management and complains that his representation has been refused to be brought forward by the union committee. Lord Penrhyn said to the committee "If you assume to act for the union men, you must act for the non-union men also;" and the union committee said "Certainly; we will act for the non-union men, and are willing to accept their complaints."

The other point urged by the hon. Member was that there was interference with the management of the quarry. I agree with the hon. Member that no employer of men in a quarry or a mine should allow himself to be dictated to by the men as to whether this rock or that seam should be worked. That should be left to the manager of the quarry or mine, but if he refuses to accept good advice offered by the men it is likely he will go into the bankruptcy court. When the hon. Gentleman was challenged to give an instance of interference in the management of the mine he gallantly rose to the challenge, but all that he could do was to quote the minutes of the committee, which minutes had, however, never been put into action. One minute set forth that the committee objected to a bargain being made with less than three men, but will the hon. Gentleman say that that minute was enforced in the quarry? Another minute referred to by the hon. Gentleman was one in which he said that the committee claimed to regulate the salary of the manager, but he did not show that minute had been attempted to be enforced. In fact, the minutes only represented a counsel of perfection, and it is idle to say that the present dispute depends in the slightest degree on any interference with the working of the quarry. Lord Penrhyn regards it as an interference with the working of the quarry when the men state that they consider that they are underpaid, but the public have been led to understand that the engineering working of the quarry is interfered with. That is not the case, and I venture to say that the popular feeling in England would back up the men in their desire to regulate the times of working and the rate of wages paid. I have no doubt that in some of the interviews, or in some letters written to the papers, some reference was made to the fact that the quarry was not paying, but has not that been said before of many other industries, and is it not a twisting of the argument to say that that is a claim to interfere with the salaries of the agents?

Reference has been made to the Dinorwic property and it was said that a strike took place there in 1886. I knew all about that strike on account of that being my first year in this House, but I had nothing to do with the quarry committee. The right to the internal management of the quarry was never in dispute. That was a matter which I said that the workmen and the employer must decide for themselves. The only question in which the public were interested was where political and religious opinions were made a disqualification for employment; and the strike of 1886 was settled under an assurance that there certainly would be no religious or political disqualification, and that amicable arrangement has been kept to this day. The quarry agent, Mr. Vivian, an uncle of the present Lord Penrhyn, had the goodwill and the confidence of the men, and when he retired from the management it was with the greatest regret of unionists and non-unionists alike. What was the difference between Dinorwic and Bethesda? It was that the arrangement made in 1886 in the former was adhered to, whereas, the settlement of 1897 in the latter had not been adhered to in the spirit and in the letter. I do not know what the motives of Lord Penrhyn or Mr. Young may be, but I do know that the universal belief in the quarry is, that whoever represents the men on the quarry committee or a strike committee is a marked man, and will be dismissed sooner or later. Union men who committed the slightest offence were dismissed at once without the benefit of clergy, while non-union men committed these offences with impunity. Robert Davis and William Evans, who were on the strike committee, were dismissed, and when the manager was asked the reason for the dismissal, the only answer was that no reason would be given. When these strikes were first started the men had no one to represent them at all; they rose like a swarm of bees under a certain impulse. The action of Lord Penrhyn and Mr. Young struck at the very roots of combination, and it was idle for them to say that they were in favour of combination. I hold that these men are claiming only the most elementary right of free men, the right to select whom they please as their spokesman.

I do not say that Lord Penrhyn is tyrannical or harsh, but I do say that he adopts a policy which is harsh and tyrannical; and I object to a great nobleman, the owner of this whole quarry, who holds the livelihood of his workmen in his hands, saying to his men, "I will not allow you to elect an independent person to represent your case, or to speak for you, though you may elect a person who is under my thumb." I say that is not reasonable. I do not contend for a moment that Lord Penrhyn adopts that course for the purpose of crushing the men, but it is certain that he has dismissed men because he considered that they used arguments before him which he did not like. It is a practice which obtains in every colliery in the kingdom to have a paid agent of the men to represent their grievances. That is a benefit to both the employer and the workman. The universal experience of every colliery proprietor is that the paid agent of the colliers is more reasonable to deal with than the dissatisfied colliers themselves. I think it is the greatest mistake in the world for Lord Penrhyn to adopt the course he has taken, for he has brought the whole power of the trades unions against him, whereas, had he been willing to concede the simple measure of justice asked of him, the struggle would have been settled many months ago.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.): My hon. friend has asked for concrete instances of interference by the quarry committee with the management of the quarry. I need only read the resolutions passed by the quarry committee in 1874 calling for the dismissal of certain men to make room for others who went out on strike. Surely that is interference with the management. The hon. Member said that these resolutions were not put in force. But why were they not? Because they had to deal with a man who refused to allow the quarry committee to put them in force. I find that after the strike of 1896, seventy-one of the leaders of the men were suspended. Of these sixty-seven were re-admitted, while of those not re-admitted, two had been discharged because they refused to comply with the Explosives Acts regulations. Does not this very fact prove that Lord Penrhyn has not a "marked" man in his quarry?

The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, who moved the Resolution, was marked with a solemnity which seemed to be rather ecclesiastical. His performance affected me as I might be affected if I saw an Archbishop on the music-hall stage. But the country had not forgotten that the right hon. Gentleman filled the office of Home Secretary a few years ago, and is believed to be anticipating again occupying a high position in the Government of the country. His Majesty's Government fully appreciates the seriousness of the view put forward by the right hon. Gentleman, who to-night has demanded that the Board of Trade shall send down a conciliator. But if Lord Penrhyn is to be interfered with, there are only three courses open — compulsory arbitration, expropriation of Lord Penrhyn, or land nationalisation. The right hon. Gentleman says he will not have compulsory arbitration, and on the other hand Lord Penrhyn will never submit to arbitration the question of the quarry committees. The hon. Member for Carnarvon Burghs would not submit the differences between himself and the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich on education to arbitration, nor would the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife submit some of his differences with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs to arbitration. The party of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution is apt to take a great interest in slates, but what is involved in this slate quarry dispute is not conciliation. It is compulsory arbitration and nothing else. If Lord Penrhyn must submit to a quarry committee, why should a ship's crew not dictate to the captain or engineer, or a committee of railway servants to a board of directors—a committee of agricultural labourers to the farmer that his cow should only be milked once a day, or a stable committee at Newmarket to the owner and trainer of a favourite that it shall not be ridden except by a member of the Anti-Gambling League? The country will take this matter seriously, and I do not believe that any person who has at heart the interest of either employees of labour or of labour itself, will congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the attitude he has taken up to-night. We all know the interest that the hon. Member for Morpeth has taken in labour matters, and we know, too, that the sympathy which he has with working men—a sympathy which working men feel for each other—has led him to take a course which I, at any rate, consider to be injudicious. I can tell him, however, that if Lord Penrhyn's quarries were situated in the counties of Northumberland or Durham he would not have the slightest difficulty in dealing with his workmen. It is not Lord Penrhyn who is at fault. He is perfectly ready to deal with his men. I would remind the House that in no slate quarries in Wales is any quarry committee tolerated. For instance, there is no such committee in the Festiniog quarries. Yet Lord Penrhyn is held up to execration because he will not allow a standing committee in his quarries. In the North of England we have a better way of arranging these disputes, and there is no pretension on the part of the men's unions to dictate as to the management of the collieries. It is provided that in the event of any change being made in the management of an undertaking no stoppage of work by the workmen shall take place. I say that the attack on Lord Penrhyn is totally unjustified. Not a tittle of evidence has been produced in the course of the debate to show that he is an unjust employer. I would not stand up in this House to defend a man whom I consider to be a harsh landlord, and I would like to point out to my hon. friends opposite the very dangerous nature of the weapon which it is sought to put into the hands of the Board of Trade. It is a weapon which some day may be used against the workmen. Surely working men have more to gain by freedom from the interference of Parliament than employers have. I think we shall be doing the greatest injustice not only to Lord Penrhyn but to the working men of England if we pass this Resolution. It would be better for the House to allow Lord Penrhyn to work out his own salvation with respect to his quarries, confident that no injustice will be done to a single man that works there.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. Gentleman who last spoke has made at least one observation which I think will carry conviction to the minds of most hon. Members of this House, and that is, that this is a matter which goes far beyond the case of Lord Penrhyn. What then becomes of the contention of the Prime Minister that there is only a trivial matter in dispute. This question is important, because the dispute is one which is devastating a whole country side. It is injuring the trade of the country, and it is having the effect of introducing foreign slates which otherwise would never have obtained a footing in our markets. The hon. Member has had a good deal to say about the quarry committee. But will it be believed that the workmen themselves have made it clear over and over again to Lord Penrhyn that they have not the slightest intention of claiming the re-establishment of the quarry committee?

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: No.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is specifically stated in a letter from the men to Lord Penrhyn in September last that they are not going to raise the point. Their words were—

> "Your Lordship has stipulated that there shall be no discussion on any proposal to restore the old quarry committee. To this we agree."

Yet the hon. Member opposite, who is supposed to be specifically briefed with the whole of the facts by Lord Penrhyn, comes here and makes a statement which is not correct, and which has been repeatedly repudiated by the men. Further than that, they authorise me to say here that they do not propose to again raise the question of re-appointing the quarry committee.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Lord Penrhyn in reply to that letter from the men, expressed his regret that there was no recognition of the fact that the negotiations were to be preceded by a distinct understanding that the claim to re-establish the quarry committee had been abandoned.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said there was an earlier letter from the men expressing their willingness not to make any mention of the quarry committee.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: But not one following the letter from Lord Penrhyn.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Surely it is not possible to have anything more specific than the words I have quoted. On September 20th the men wrote, with reference to the specific condition laid down by his Lordship as to the understanding on which the interview was granted, that they were willing to omit any reference to the question of the quarry committee and to confine their representations to the basis of the 1870 settlement. Surely it is impossible to have anything more clear than that. It is significant that while we are complaining of the action of Lord Penhryn during the last few years, hon. Members on the other side have to go back a period of thirty years to find cause of complaint against the men. The hon. Member has defended the action of Lord Penrhyn in dismissing the men's leaders, and he said that two very prominent ones were discharged because of some breach of the Explosives Regulations. I have been told there was no such breach on their part. Mr. Young, the manager of the quarry, wrote a letter to Lord Penrhyn on the 11th June, 1899, in which he said "Just before my return Mr. Pritchard suspended two men—both fire-brands." Are these the explosives referred to by the hon. Member? Mr. Young does not make any concealment of the cause of their dismissal, for he says that the discharge of these fire-brands will have a very good effect. I should like to make one or two observations with regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Macclesfield, because he is the one with whom we have mostly to deal in this matter. He spoke the mind of Lord Penrhyn and of the management of the quarry. One thing he said which I think may point towards peace. I understand that he has made the declaration that as long as the men frankly give up the notion of a quarry committee, Lord Penrhyn is perfectly prepared to meet them. I am authorised to make the statement on their behalf that they will frankly give up every notion of the quarry committee. They have said so before, but if there is any misconception about it they say it again now. They have no notion of setting it up. But there were one or two things I was sorry to hear the hon. Member say. He said the questions we are discussing to-night are the questions which were disposed of by the jury in the recent libel action. How did he propose to prove it? He quoted a statement from the appeal of my hon. and learned friend to the jury. But he knew perfectly well that the counsel for Lord Penrhyn expressly repudiated the notion that that was the matter in dispute. The hon. Member knew that the Lord Chief Justice repeatedly said that they were not the questions at issue. Why did he withhold that fact from the House of Commons? I think it is very unfair that he should attempt to lead the House of Commons to believe that the verdict of the jury was upon the questions we are now discussing. Then there is a statement of the hon. Member with regard to the quarry committee. He put forward what appeared to be some preposterous claims set up by the quarry committee. Does he mean to say that the quarry committee passed a resolution demanding and pressing upon the management the concession of three months holiday for the men?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): That is what he said.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I must say this is carrying the thing a little too far.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Every single statement I made I quoted from the minute-book of the quarry committee. The hon. Member should see the book if he doubts it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I ask the hon. Member again, because I am speaking after conversation with a member of the quarry committee. Does the hon. Member really mean to induce the House to believe that these men, through their representatives, seriously claimed three months holiday? I think we are entitled to ask that. Since I do not get an answer, let me at once say that it is an absolute and unmitigated falsehood.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I really cannot sit still under that kind of thing. I would not take a charge of that sort from any man in the world. The quotation from the minute-book is as follows. (HON. MEMBERS: What date?) The date I cannot give, but the minute-book is between 1874 and 1885—

> "Matter to be put before the galleries. Holidays for three months to whoever wishes it, and every man to have his bargain on his return."

I ask the hon. Member please to withdraw the word "falsehood." [Cries of "Withdraw."]

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member used the term falsehood with reference to the hon. Member for Macclesfield——

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have said I did not.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's language was ambiguous, or I should have called him to order at once, but I understand him now to say that he did not use the word with reference to the hon. Member.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I was under the impression—I am subject to correction—that in making the statement I said it was not in reference to the hon. Member. What I say is this. I have not seen the minute-book, but I have the statement of a prominent member of the quarry committee, and if the hon. Member puts it forward that the whole of the men made a claim for three months holiday, I say it is absolutely untrue. Here is an action in which all these charges against the men and the Committee were investigated; it is extraordinary that this statement was never made there! I still say that the men never put forward this claim. I do not know what the hon. Member has in his possession, but this does not appear in the copy of the minute-book I have seen. The hon. Member has it as it has been given to him; I do not say that he is responsible for any mistake or misrepresentation; but I should like to know if the hon. Member has the original. These copies are translations. Who made the translations? It is a matter for comment that this charge was never put forward against the men under circumstances where there was an opportunity for investigating it. These questions have all been introduced by hon. Members opposite. The question before the House is the action of the Government with regard to the Penrhyn dispute The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University suggested the practicability of bringing a vote of censure against both Front Benches. I think that would be a rather popular Motion. But let us take them in turn, and deal first with the present Treasury Bench, because they have the responsibility now. This Motion of censure is not confined merely to administration. The right hon. Gentleman says they ought to legislate by means of a more effective Bill. I quite agree, but let us first of all demonstrate that the present Act is ineffective. Let us exhaust the possibilities of this Act to begin with. The right hon. Gentleman has overlooked the fact that the Board of Trade could bring the parties together. Is not that very important in view of the statement made by the hon. Member for Macclesfield with regard to the quarry committee? That is exactly the sort of misconception that the Board of Trade might have removed if they had taken action. It is perfectly true that this is a matter of considerable importance outside the district itself. It is not merely a question of the distress in Bethesda, or that a once thriving community is withering away. It is all very well to talk about the present prosperity of the quarry. Lord Penrhyn appeared by counsel before the Quarter Sessions to have his assessment lowered because he was not making the money he used to out of the quarry. The slate trade throughout the kingdom is suffering. Slates which had hardly a chance before are pouring in from the Continent and America, and once they get in it will be very difficult to keep them out. It is a matter of the greatest possible importance to the whole of the community. I hope that nothing has been said in this debate to prevent the possibility of conciliation. I would ask the Prime Minister to remember that the most exasperating statements have been made by hon. Gentlemen on his own side of the House. The men have been perfectly willing, and are still willing, to meet Lord Penrhyn, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, to consider whether he cannot see his way even now to suggest to Lord Penrhyn that he should meet his men.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): In the short time I shall occupy the time of the House, it is not my intention to pursue the particular line of argument which has been followed during the evening sitting. The question of the respective action and the merits of the conduct of Lord Penrhyn and the workmen is, no doubt, one of great interest, and I am not surprised that it should have been much discussed to-night; but it is not the question which the Motion of my right. hon. friend brings before the House on this occasion. That question is whether the Board of Trade has been well advised in the action it has taken, or the inaction it has followed, in this matter. I have two observations to make on the speech of the President of the Board of Trade. The first is this. I think it was regrettable that he expressed a rather ungenerous view of the action of the men in regard to this matter. He implied that they had been slow in appealing to the Board of Trade. He went on to analyse their motives in delaying their application, and he implied, in fact, he almost stated to the House his opinion, that their motive had been to assist themselves and their friends in the raising of money, and that therefore they were practically insincere in their appeal to the Government to interfere. I think that that was not a right observation to make, and I do not think there is any justification for it. The justification, at all events, seems to me to be destroyed by the fact that a considerable time before they made this appeal to the Board of Trade the men had themselves asked for arbitration, which proves their sincerity, and their perfect confidence in their own case. But then the right hon. Gentleman twitted the Opposition with their conduct in having brought forward this Motion at all. He represented us as being anxious, if we could, to bring a vote of censure against the Government, and having greedily laid hold of this comparatively small and local matter for that purpose. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that in that he is entirely mistaken. If we wanted materials for votes of censure we have an *embarras des richesses*. I am one who has never been able to see any particular advantage in numerous votes of censure, even where Parties were more evenly divided than they are at present. I have been myself a humble member of a Government which had to meet votes of censure almost every week, and sometimes more than one in a week, and in observing the effect I have never been able to discover that the Opposition who indulged in these frequent and prolific votes of censure did any good for themselves by them. In our present position, with such a majority against us as we have, I have never been able to see that we should go out of our way searching for votes of censure. But this is a perfectly clear and distinct case, as we think, of avoidance of duty on the part of a public Department, and I am not aware of any other means that we have of bringing it in a definite, formal, and peremptory form before the House than by such a Motion as my right hon. friend has made. The right hon. Gentleman went on with his picture, and he imagined what would happen if we succeeded in ousting the Government with this Motion. His imagination led him to portray a Government formed from this side of the House endeavouring to deal with this question, and he expressed his anticipation that we should find it impossible to deal with it because we should encounter, as he has had to encounter, the stubborn will of Lord Penrhyn; and he pictured us, therefore, with all the responsibilities of the Empire upon us, as unable to get over this little difficulty with this one determined man. I do not think that was a very flattering picture, not only of us, but of the British character, for a Minister of the Crown to draw, and I can assure him that I think that if such a concatenation of circumstances were to occur we might find some way of dealing with the matter. [" How ? "] other than that of the right hon. Gentleman, which is to stand shivering in the presence of Lord Penrhyn, unable even to venture to approach him with a view to introducing the element of conciliation into this deplorable dispute. [" How ? "] This concatenation of circumstances has not yet arisen.

I have said that I am not going into the question of the relative degrees of blame that may be attachable to the one party or the other in this dispute. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Macclesfield, who often appears in the *rôle* of *advocatus diaboli* [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh ")—I am entirely wrong there, because he has not been the advocate of the accuser, but of the accused person in each case. He often appears here as the advocate of a prominent personage in whom he is interested, or whom he represents, and he discharges that duty with great effect. I do not wonder that he has made a strong case to-day. If I were to make an observation on the case he has made out, I should say he has made too strong a case, because if matters are of such a rosy hue as he has painted them, and if it be true that Lord Penrhyn's only points of difference with his late employees are the question of the resuscitation of the quarry committee and the possible displacement of the men now at work, if these are the only two points, they are out of the way already, for we have it on authority that neither the one nor the other point is insisted upon by the men. Here let me point out, not only that there are these grounds of agreement, but that they would have been at once discovered if there had been that bringing together of the parties which it was the duty of the Board of Trade, in our opinion, to have brought about. We say the Department ought to have used the powers it possesses, and we naturally contrast the action of the Department in the present case with that pursued at the end of 1896, and the beginning of 1897. But we remember that in those days the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was President of the Board of Trade, and that right hon. Gentleman, if he will allow me to say so, has on many occasions appeared as the good fairy of the Government. He has often led them out of trouble. I admit that he does not display the usual attributes and properties of a fairy ; we see neither wings nor wand ; but again and again he has acted in that capacity. He has been in many offices, and in every one he has left behind him traces of his conciliatory spirit. When the Party opposite resolved to take the great and fatal leap of giving self-government to the counties, they looked about for some one who would lend the sweet influence of the magistrates and loose the bonds of County Councils, and they found him in the right hon. Gentleman who was President of the Local Government Board. Then a few years ago the Government, thinking for decency's sake it was right to make some attempt to check the worst developments of drunkenness, again found a champion to engage the leviathan of liquor in the right hon. Gentleman, who had become Home Secretary. Then, again, the Government are troubled with a tax of an unjust and irritating character which in some dream of inter-colonial relations of a new kind they had introduced ; how and where are they to find any one who will rid them of this Old Man of the Sea ? They then made the right hon. Gentleman Chancellor of the Exchequer. We are not astonished to find that it was in his time at the Board of Trade that that Conciliation Bill was passed which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University speaks of with such contempt, although he voted for it as a Member of the Government, and I have not heard that he offered resignation of his office in indignation at the imbecility of the measure. When that Bill passed it was the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer who conducted the negotiations my right hon. friend the Member for Fife has described.

The present head of the Board of Trade says that in the days in which we live that course cannot be followed, that there cannot be any more appeals made to men or masters to meet together with the assistance of the Board of Trade in order to try if a dispute can be settled. He says that there is no obligation laid upon the Board of Trade, but that it is left to their discretion. Yes, Sir, but that discretion is subject to the review of

Parliament, and it is expected that Parliament, by compulsion if necessary, will see that it is carried out. The right hon. Gentleman then says:—

> "What is the use of it when there is no prospect of success?"

How does he know that there is no prospect of success? How can he realise what the influence would be of the two facts to which I have referred, that the men neither insist on the committee nor on any disturbance of the existing working? Are there not cases, which my right hon. friend has quoted. where with but the authority of this poor Act, so contemptible in the eyes of the right hon. Gentleman below the Gangway opposite, and with but a paltry prospect of success the very best results were obtained by this process? And supposing the worst happened, and Lord Penrhyn rudely rejected the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman and steeled himself against the words and efforts of conciliation, would the Conciliation Act be in any worse case than if it had been laid up in lavender as it is now? Has the right hon. Gentleman considered what the effect of his attitude is? It is the most detrimental course that could be followed, this discreet quiescence, a quiescence that very easily becomes acquiescence. What could happen that would be more likely to encourage the contumacious workman, or the stubborn and headstrong employer, to resist any attempt at conciliation than that they should know that all they have to do, according to the precedent the right hon. Gentleman has established, is to declaim in public that they will not accept his interference, and then the right hon. Gentleman and his Department will leave them alone? My firm belief is that a strenuous and courageous proposal for conciliation, such as was made in 1896, if it had no immediate effect would, at all events, throw the burden of responsibility so completely on the refusing side as to exert a great influence towards a settlement. Was there ever such a concourse of authority as we have in this case? Here is a dispute which is going on with the calamitous results which have been described to the House. It is of old standing; the want of confidence between the parties is of old standing, at all events; you have the highest local authority urging conciliation, you have the Lord Chief Justice of England, who has heard the whole case, the jury in the case, and Lord Penrhyn's own counsel, all expressing the opinion that a very little effort would overcome the difficulties so that the quarrel might be brought to an end. Are all these things to be frustrated simply because in 1896 Lord Penrhyn would not allow the conference to be held under the conditions then laid down? I agree with those who have said that this is no ordinary trade dispute, no mere local difference about wages, hours of labour, or the management of a trade. I venture to say that this is as much a land dispute as one of any kind. These men who are involved have built their own houses, in some cases with their own hands; they have from father to son acquired a particular skill in a peculiar trade, so that while they are unfitted for most other occupations other men are little fit for this trade. In that way they have acquired a sort of moral tenant-right in the life from which they are now shut out. [AN HON. MEMBER: By whom?] By whose fault? That is what we want to know. I pronounce no opinion upon it. [A laugh.] I suppose the hon. Member who laughs would pronounce an opinion upon it; he does not want any inquiry, he has made up his mind long ago. The House of Commons and the public generally ought to know much more about the real facts of the case before they come to any conclusion in the matter; and for my part I decline to give any opinion. But I urge the necessity of an inquiry at the instance of the Board of Trade in order that we may know the facts. The question is a large one. It is not made less important and less serious, but more serious, by the fact to which I have referred—that it introduces the rights of the landowner into the ordinary questions of a trade dispute. To let matters go on as they are would be the worst possible service, not only to the interests of the workers but to the interests of the capitalist and the landowner. Therefore it is that we use to-day the only means in our power to urge upon the Government to take such steps as are open to them for putting an end to a disastrous situation.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know that the right hon. Gentleman has contributed any very powerful arguments in order to induce the House to make up its mind on the merits of the dispute which has occupied so much of our time this afternoon, but at all events I did hope, during the first quarter of an hour of his speech, that I should be able to congratulate him upon having given the third of the many speeches which have been delivered to-night, but only the third, which is really relevant to the issue before the House. The right hon. Gentleman who initiated this debate confined himself, amid the cold approval, I think, of his friends [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."]—the cold admiration which I entirely share, to the strict issue before us, which was whether the Government was or was not to be condemned for its action or inaction in respect to the Bethesda dispute, and the studious moderation with which the right hon. Gentleman developed his thesis I am sure won admiration from both sides of the House. When my right hon. friend near me came to reply he also confined himself to that issue—whether the Government was or was not responsible for any failure in settling that dispute, whether they had or had not used to the utmost advantage the powers given to them by Parliament. But after those two right hon. Gentlemen had spoken not one single Member of the House until the right hon. Gentleman rose, addressed himself to the vote of censure on the Government. The question fell—or it rose—from a vote of censure on the Government to a vote of censure on Lord Penrhyn. The right hon. Gentleman was relevant during most of his speech, but there was one considerable lapse in the middle of it in which I really thought he was proposing the toast of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer at a public dinner, and I really felt inclined to get up and interrupt the right hon. Gentleman at that part of his speech and lead off with "For he's a jolly good fellow." I do not think a single word of the right hon. Gentleman's elaborate eulogy was a bit in excess of the merits of the subject of it. The only reason why I introduce this topic at this hour of the evening is to point out that the right hon. Gentleman must have had very little to say against the Government as a whole when most of his time was occupied in praising a very prominent individual member of the Government. I am the more surprised because the right hon. Gentleman gave us to understand in the earlier part of his speech, replying to the criticisms passed by my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade on the fact that this really was rather a trivial theme for anything so important as a vote of censure, that Gentlemen on that side of the House have a perfect *embarras des richesses* of subjects on which they would wish to move votes of censure. Is it not rather an unfortunate thing that, having this vast number of possible selections, the actual subject chosen is one on which only three relevant speeches can be made, and that one of those relevant speeches should be chiefly devoted to a eulogy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when it is the demerits of the President of the Board of Trade which are under discussion? I am sure that, if the right hon. Gentleman would only do me the honour to consult me as a friend on these matters before he selects the subject of a vote of censure, I would give him far better advice than that which he is disposed to follow.

Now, may I, following the good example of the right hon. Gentleman, for a moment bring back the question from Lord Penrhyn to the Government? The purpose of this Motion is, of course, to condemn the President of the Board of Trade, and through him the Government, and we are really driven back to the purport and intention of the Act which it is the President of the Board of Trade's business to administer. May I remind the House that not ten minutes ago the right hon. Gentleman told us that this dispute was a land dispute, and may I read to him the preamble of the Act which he thinks my right hon. friend ought to put in force? It is "an Act to make better provision for the settlement of trade disputes." So the right hon. Gentleman quarrels with the President of the Board of Trade for not putting into force an Act for the settlement of trade disputes in a dispute which he himself calls a land dispute. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] I do not want to press the point, but the right hon. Gentleman opposite did make that observation, and that observation does call for the reply which I have ventured to give it. But, of course, there are much more important issues, and the issue, as far as the Board of Trade is concerned, is this. The Act is a Conciliation Act. It leaves absolute discretion to the Board of Trade to use the Act for the purpose of conciliation—not for the purpose of compulsorily settling disputes, not for the purpose of informing the public mind on the merits of disputes, but, to the best of its ability, acting with tact and judgment, with knowledge of the intentions of both parties to the dispute, to intervene when, but only when, the responsible Minister thinks that intervention may lead to some settlement. Now does any human being believe that the intervention of the Board of Trade, howsoever well meant, howsoever tactful, would have brought Lord Penrhyn and his quarrymen closer together than they have been? We have two crucial experiments before us which enable us to form some kind of opinion on that subject. We have, in the first place, the example of my right hon. friend, my well and properly praised friend, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who made this experiment in 1897 with the best intentions, and made it with energy and ability, but whose efforts, as everybody admits, and as he would himself be the first to admit, did not succeed, unfortunately, in settling the dispute. But we have a much later experiment, that of Sir Edward Clarke, Lord Penrhyn's counsel, a man whose capacity and ability are well known to everybody here. He, having been Lord Penrhyn's counsel, and intimately acquainted with all the facts of the case, did make the attempt, and also failed. Now is there the smallest ground to suppose that where the Government failed in 1897 and where Lord Penrhyn's counsel failed in 1903 any object in the direction of conciliation would be served by the further intervention of the Board of Trade? But then it is said in answer to that. that after all my right hon. friend might have failed, but he would, in the first place, have got a report on which the public might have formed some judgment, and, in the second place, he could have done no harm whatever, and might conceivably have done some good. Well, let us just consider both those propositions.

As regards the report, what value would a report be made under an Act which gives no power to summon witnesses, no power to examine witnesses on oath, no power to examine any man who does not wish to be examined, no power to bring both parties in the dispute before them? The report of an inquiry of that kind might have some merits, but whatever merits it might have, it would evidently be perfectly incapable of bringing the facts before the public which would enable it to form a fair judgment on the point. If it is replied to that, that supposing Lord Penrhyn had refused to give his evidence before the conciliator he would have brought his own fate upon his head, and would be himself responsible for any public misapprehension, I would point out that, whether or not Lord Penrhyn would then have deserved his fate, justice would not have been done, the public would not have known how the facts lay and be in a position to form any fair judgment on the subject, and the very object hon. Gentlemen opposite have in view would not have been served. If their object is to turn this Conciliation Act into an Act of Inquiry, then you must modify it profoundly; you must give powers of compulsion to the conciliator, who will be a conciliator no longer, but a judge with all the power and independence of a judge. But if you do that you will require a new Act of Parliament, and will profoundly modify the legislation which you deliberately adopted. May I remind the right hon. Gentleman further, that when he looks forward to making these modifications in this or some other direction in regard to the Act, he is running directly counter to the disclaimer made by the mover of the Motion, who initiated this debate by saying that he desired no modification of the existing law. I would beg the House to bear in mind that the existing law was intended to be a voluntary law in every respect, as regards both employer and employed, and that if you mean to keep that principle, you cannot turn it even into a law for a Court of compulsory inquiry, much less for a Court of compulsory arbitration, but that if you choose to leave the safe ground on which Parliament has placed this measure you will be driven, step by step, first to making the existing Act an Act enabling you to have compulsory inquiries, and then an Act for enabling the Court to give a compulsory decision. I see no safe ground on which you can pause before you come to that ultimate conclusion—a conclusion to which every party in this House, the representatives of labour no less than the representatives of capital, is reluctant to come. But if you once say that whenever either party to a dispute appeals to the Board of Trade you are to have an inquiry, and if that inquiry is to be of use, you must compel both parties to come before you, you are driven the entire length to an entirely novel and revolutionary system which, instead of this purely voluntary system of conciliation, will give you compulsory arbitration. That really, I think, exhausts the narrow part of the controversy which has been touched on in connection with the vote of censure. It is not my business to go into that larger field of controversy which deals with the merits, not of the Government, but of Lord Penrhyn.

I must say one word upon the existing Act of Parliament. My right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University, in an interesting, ingenious, and most characteristic speech, told us that this Act, worked in the voluntary fashion in which the Board of Trade is working it, was a sham and delusion. If my right hon. friend will read the Report of the Board of Trade as to the working of the Bill, he will, I think, withdraw from that statement. The number of cases which the Board of Trade have dealt with since the Act came into force has been very great, and no less than ninety-six disputes in the eight years which have elapsed have been settled by this voluntary machinery.

SIR JOHN GORST: They would have been settled without the Act at all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think not. Let my right hon. friend read the Report of the Board of Trade. But it is certainly true that conciliation is of no use until the people concerned wish to be conciliated. You cannot bring the parties together until they have some inclination to be brought together; and you cannot make them friends until some scintillation of friendship has begun to spring up. That process requires a little assistance sometimes, and it has been most successfully given by the Board of Trade under this Act; and I do not think that we ought to undervalue what the Act has done, or can do, simply because it cannot do, and was never intended to do, much more difficult things—things we should all like to see accomplished, but the machinery for accomplishing which it is not easy to devise. As to Lord Penrhyn, I have only one thing to say. As far as I can make out from the most interesting and brilliant speech of my hon. friend the Member for Macclesfield—a speech listened to by his friends with sympathy and admiration, and by his opponents with admiration and even with some sympathy—as far as I understand from that speech, Lord Penrhyn's only quarrel with the quarry committee is that that committee did two things, neither of which ought to be done, it will be admitted, by any committee which professes to represent the general interests of the workmen as a whole in any business whatever. In the first place, the committee are alleged to have interfered with the management of the quarry—a thing most deleterious from the business point of view; and, secondly, it is alleged that they did not represent the workmen as a whole, though they were supposed to. I understand that Lord Penrhyn has no objection to there being a committee of trade unionists in his quarry provided that they only represent the trade unionists, and that if there is to be a committee professing to represent the men as a whole, that committee cannot and ought not to be drawn from the trade unionists alone. Such a committee must represent every class of workmen, organised and unorganised, in the quarry. The next proposition is that Lord Penrhyn is the proper judge of the number of men who can best carry on the business in his own quarry, and he cannot be expected to bring in men who have been in his employment, but who are so no longer, either by unduly increasing the number of men in his quarries or by turning out the men already in his employment: I do not think I have miss-stated the case, and I do not believe there is a man on either side of the House, Conservative or Radical, trade unionist or employer, whatever his opinions may be, or whatever his social status may be, who differs from either of those propositions. If that be so, this debate, which has served so few purposes, may possibly have served the purpose of clearing the atmosphere on this subject. And I am emboldened to think that this statement of Lord Penrhyn's opinions, which I have collected from those who have spoken on his behalf, will stand cross-examination, because I gathered from my hon. friend's speech that it was advanced in court. He could have been cross-examined in court, and was not cross-examined upon it.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): Lord Penrhyn never in any way whatever assented to the formation of a trade union in his quarry. Lord Penrhyn was challenged to state the form or nature of organisation he would allow to any committee or body on behalf of the men, and he could not state it. It is an absolute novelty to say that he is willing to allow a committee, but not a particular quarry committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps I was wrong to have travelled outside the vote of censure to the subject which has engaged the attention of the House of Commons throughout this debate. But the point, as I understand it, is this. Lord Penrhyn has no objection to the men belonging to a trade union. He has no objection to his workmen organising themselves as they please, and therefore it follows necessarily that he has no objection to those members among his working body who are trade unionists. What he does object to is the trade union committee or the committee representing the trade unionists, professing to represent the whole body of workmen. And though it is not my business to offer an opinion on the point I think Lord Penrhyn is perfectly right, and I believe everybody else thinks so too.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: On that point, yes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then the subject on which we have been quarrelling all night is a subject on which we appear to be agreed. But how about the subject on which we have not been quarrelling at all — the merits of the Government? Is it really worth while to invoke all the machinery of a vote of censure in order to deal with what at the very worst is a mistaken exercise of discretion in a matter in which really the House at large can hardly be a judge of what sound discretion is? You give to the President of the Board of Trade for the time being a most difficult and delicate duty, the right exercise of which depends on a nice judgment of the forces concerned, of the intentions of the employer, of the views of the employed. And then you make that nice exercise of discretion the subject of the clumsy analysis inevitable to a Parliamentary debate! I think you are doing a great deal by controversies of this kind to ruin the value of an Act which has done great service, and I do not think this House gains, and I do not think the country gains, by bringing these personal and trade disputes into the arena of party politics. Let us suppose for a moment that the rights of the case are with Lord Penrhyn. Let us suppose that hon. Gentlemen opposite themselves thought that the rights of the case were with Lord Penrhyn and not with Lord Penrhyn's late employees. Should we have a vote of censure in favour of a single employer, or is the machinery of a vote of censure never to be used except in favour of large numbers and against an individual? I look with great distrust on these proceedings. It was the hon. Member for Carnarvon who said just now with perfect truth that his true antagonist was not the Gentleman sitting on this bench, but my hon. friend the Member for Macclesfield. He was right. And what does that mean? It means that the whole party machinery of this House has been called into play to decide whether the representatives of the men in a particular dispute in this House are right or the representatives of their employer. That is bad for the House of Commons. It is bad for the party system. It is bad for the trade and economic conditions of the country, and I greatly deplore that the right hon. Gentleman, in the exercise of his undoubted prerogative of choosing out of the *embarras des richesses* the number of things on which it was worth while to attack the Government by all the elaborate machinery of a vote of censure, should have thought fit to select this one topic, the whole brunt of the controversy on which has turned on the merits of one single individual in the management of his own property. I do not profess to any knowledge of this dispute. I only wish it could be brought to an end. I only wish that all the unhappiness and misery to which it has inevitably given rise could, as by the fairy wand of my right hon. friend, be suddenly brought to a conclusion. But, Sir, nothing of that kind is gained; we make no step in the direction of that progress by turning this unhappy local dispute into a topic on which Parties are to try their strength, and by which, I suppose, it is intended to serve some obscure party object in the perennial controversy between the two great Parties of the State.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182; Noes, 316. (Division List No. 70.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Geo. M. (*Edinburgh*)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas Ramsay (*Galway*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (*Berwick*)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (*Accrington*
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mellor, Rt. Hn. John William
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N*
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid*)
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (*Saffron Walden*)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (*North'nts*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomas, J. A. (*Glam., Gower*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)

Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, O. (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, Fred W. (*Norfolk, Mid*
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Fras. T. (*Windsor*)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt-Col. H. F. (*Middlesex*
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans- (*Tr. H'ml'ts*
Gore, Hn. G. R C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs*
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashford*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, Jas. (*Staffords., N. W.*
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (*Somr s't, E.*
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (*Kent, Fave'h'm*)
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks, N. R.*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Lowther, Rt Hn. J W (*Cum. Penr*
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*

M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver,SirLewis(*Edinb'rgh,W*
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring,Hn.W.F.
Maxwell,RtHnSirH.E(*Wigt'n*
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu,Hon. J. Scott (*Hants*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert, Jasper (*Shropsh*
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morgan,Hn. Fred (*Monm'shire*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lt.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley,Hn.M.W.(*Stalybridge*)
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild,Hon.LionelWalter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford,W. W. (*Liverpool*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(*IsleofWight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart,H.M.(*Renfrew*)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,H C(*North'mb.Tyneside*
Smith,JamesParker(*Lanarks*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley,EdwardJas.(*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,Rt.HnJ.G.(*Oxf'dUniv*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.ACE(*Taunton*
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (*Notts*)
Whiteley, H.(*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
WilliamsRtHnJPowell-(*B'h'm*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Wilson,A.Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R.(*B*
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor,Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILLS IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time this day.

WAYS AND MEANS [23RD APRIL.]

Resolution reported.

CUSTOMS—TEA.

"That the Customs Duty now charged on Tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four (that is to say): Tea—the pound Sixpence."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chairman of Ways and Means, and Mr. Arthur Elliot.

IRISH VALUATION ACTS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what changes in the Irish Valuation Acts are desirable in order to enable a re-valuation of rateable property in any district to be made on a basis equitable to all classes of ratepayers, and to be brought into force in an effective manner.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Clancy, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Duke, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Lee, Mr. Lough, Mr. M'Cann, Mr. M'Killop, and Mr. Randles.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 28th April, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Jewish Colonisation Association [H.L.].

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].

A petition of Messrs. Lewin, Gregory, and Anderson, of 6, The Sanctuary, Westminster, Parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of Messrs Greenall, Whitley, and Company, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition.

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Bill [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 13th and 26th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª.

Jewish Colonisation Association Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order).

South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]: North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Lytton; read, and agreed to.

Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills—viz.:

E. Albemarle,
L. Clifford of Chudleigh (chairman),
L. Oranmore and Browne,
L. Farrer,
L. Wandsworth.

Agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition against or for Amendment of, of the Faculty of Procurators of Greenock. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition against. Of the Society of Solicitors in the Supreme Courts of Scotland. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of, of the Darlaston Licensed Victuallers and Beer Retailers Society. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Petition for abrogation of, of Roman Catholics residing in Ripon. Read and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order): Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order) and dispensed with: Bill read 3ª and passed.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

[THIRD READING.]

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved that the Bill be now read 3ª.—(*Lord Avebury.*)

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, instead of simply moving that this Bill be read a third time this day six months, it appeared to me, so important are the principles involved in the Bill, that it would be better to proceed by Resolution. I therefore drew up the Resolution which stands in my name on the notice Paper, and which is as follows—"That legislative interference with freedom of contract and the liberty of labour of full-grown persons is contrary to the hereditary rights of a free people, That these rights are taken away by the Shops (Early Closing) Bill; and this House declines to proceed further with a measure hurtful alike to trade and industry, which would press cruelly on small shopkeepers and their working-class customers, and for the first time in modern legislation limits the hours of free adult labour. Now, my Lords, I venture to think that your Lordships cannot deny the truth of the propositions here laid down. Can anyone deny that legislative interference with freedom of contract and the liberty of labour of full-grown persons is contrary to the hereditary rights of a free people? Further, can anyone deny that those rights are taken away by this Bill, and that the Bill is hurtful alike to trade and industry, and would press cruelly on small shopkeepers and their working-class customers? The importance of this measure cannot be exaggerated. It is not a question of the hours of shop assistants, but of freedom of trade and adult labour, and this Bill, for the first time in modern legislation, attempts to limit the hours of free adult labour. In moving this Resolution I do not intend to go into the provisions of the Bill. It does not matter to me how the Bill is put into operation. The question with me is its principle, and it is to the principle of the Bill that, with your Lordships' kind indulgence, I would direct your attention. In so doing, I propose to show whence this sort of legislation comes, whither it infallibly leads, and what hope or chance there is of putting a stop to it. Now, my Lords, whence comes this kind of legislation? I give my noble friend, Lord Avebury, full credit for his action in this matter. I believe him to be moved by the purest and truest philanthropy. He has for over twenty years been working on this question. Now philanthropy is a very good thing in its way. We are all, I believe, kindly disposed to our fellow creatures; but there should be discretion even in philanthropy. There is ill-regulated philanthropy in social life. Where does that lead? It leads to the divorce court. There is ill-regulated philanthropy in legislation. Where does that lead? It leads to such a Bill as that of my noble friend. Therefore I am quite willing to accept philanthropy as the bed-rock upon which my noble friend rests his Bill; but, my Lords, there are other considerations in politics which also enter into the principles of legislation.

To my great surprise, and I have no doubt to the great surprise of your Lordships, in the early part of this session my noble friend, Lord Ribblesdale, gave notice of a Bill of the same kind as that now before the House. I naturally thought that my noble friend was acting in harmony with Lord Avebury; that Lord Avebury, having found it difficult to carry his Bill across a rather stiff country, had gone to my noble friend, the ex-Master of the extinct Royal Buckhounds, in the hope that he would be able to carry it more successfully; but very soon afterwards Lord Avebury's Bill itself appeared, and the Lord Chancellor, thinking, no doubt, that you ought not to allow in this House poaching on other people's measures, shunted that Bill, with the result that we now have my noble friend Lord Avebury's Measure alone before us. I do not think we should be hard on Lord Ribblesdale for the course he took. He is a good party man. He has the letters C.B.—I do not mean the Companionship of the Bath—well burnt into his breast. He naturally felt it would never do, in these days when Liberalism means something different from what it used to mean, to allow a Liberal Unionist to carry a measure which would be so popular with a certain class of voters, and that therefore he and his Party must go in for it. This is confirmed by what has passed lately with reference to Liberalism. When Lord Rosebery seceded from the so-called Liberal Party there were no end of speeches made about the true principles of Liberalism. What are those principles? The principles of the Liberal Party we now know are those of labour. I think it was Lord Tweedmouth who first suggested that the Liberal Party should go in for labour, and now Liberalism reads "Labourism"—it has nothing to do with Liberty.

Thus, what have we had within the last few days but a sign of the times showing what Liberals are doing? We had Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman asking for a day for Mr. Asquith's Motion, of want of confidence consequent upon the non-intervention of the Government in the labour dispute at Lord Penhryn's slate quarries, which was moved in the House of Commons yesterday. There and then the Campbell-Bannerman party and the Rosebery-Asquith party both plunged collectively head over heels into the hot and troubled waters of Bethesda, in the full belief that thus all this Party's ills would be removed, and the sore that existed in the Liberal Party would be cured. Thus there is no hope, I think, of support for my Resolution from noble Lords on the Liberal side of the House. We know, too, the active part which Earl Spencer took—at any rate, if not he himself, which his carriage took—in the Woolwich Election. [Earl Spencer dissented.] Well, the noble Earl got the credit for it. I read that all the Liberal carriages had been sent down there, and that the procession of carriages was headed by my noble friend's family coach. The newspaper reporters were evidently in the wrong, as the noble Earl denies having sent his carriage. I think I have clearly shown that this kind of legislation has its origin in philanthropy *plus* popularity. Having thus shown the origin of this sort of legislation, I now ask your Lordships to consider, if you pass the Third Reading of such a Bill as this, containing such novel, and, I hold, such evil principles, however well-intentioned, whither will it lead? The end is certain. Read the list of Bills in another place bearing on this question. There are three or four Shop Bills, whose success will be the natural sequence of your passing the Third Reading of the Bill now before the House. There is the Wages Boards Bill to create Wages Boards to fix the minimum rate of wages to be paid to workers. Then comes the question of eight hours in mines. Is there a single noble Lord who hears me, and who has a grain of common sense, who does not feel that, as certain as the sun will rise to-morrow—although we do not often see it in London—if you pass this Bill you will be compelled to pass the Bill for eight hours in mines? Further, there is a Bill in another place to deprive all persons employed on tramways of their liberty to work more than eight hours a day. Now, who are the persons who bring forward these Bills? They are Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Tennant, Sir Albert Rollit (a Socialist Conservative), and Mr. Keir Hardie.

I have a letter in my hand from the Scottish Trade Protection Association asking me to withdraw my Resolution against this Bill. I naturally answered that here was a Bill which interfered with trade, with hours of labour, and everything else, and I asked if a National Trade Protection Society did not resist such a Bill what were they formed to do. I pointed out that if they approved of this Bill they must be prepared to see the hand of the State in all their concerns, to see everything regulated by the State, and this is the end your Liberal Socialist has in view; for, three years ago, in answer to a question from me at a discussion at the Society of Arts on Municipal Trading, Mr. John Burns admitted that the Party he represents desire that property of all kinds—lands, houses, shops, mines, everything, including shop distribution—should be under the control of a labour-governed

State. That is what you have to look to as the result of the legislation for which my noble friends have gone in. But they should bear in mind that we have in this country labour that is organised and labour that is not organised. Out of the labour population of the country only one in ten are members of trades unions. There are nine labourers who are not organised to every one who is, and they do not wish to be interfered with by this sort of legislation, and yet it is for the support of the organised one that political Labourism is labouring.

I have now, I think, shown whither this legislation leads. It remains for me to ask your Lordships to consider what possible check there can be on such a tendency. You already know by sad experience that there is not one of your Lordships' homesteads in England or in Scotland, in connection with which the principles of the Irish land legislation have not been more or less established, and I ask, what possible check can there be now upon the like spread of evil principles in this Bill to trade and industry of all kinds? If my noble friend the Duke of Devonshire and the present Government choose to go on racing with the labourists on the socialistic race-course, they must infallibly be beaten, for, no matter what the state of the labour-socialistic horse may be—broken-winded, spavined and everything else—if you try to run your mild socialism against it, you cannot help being beaten. The labourists are sure to go one worse than you. What then is the proper thing for you to do in your own interests? What have the Liberals done? They have cast the old Liberal flag into the gutter. Let then the Conservative Unionist Government take it up—cleanse it—hold it aloft, and all men who love Liberty will rally round it regardless of Party. Lord Rosebery had this chance, but he lost it—threw it away. Suppose, in blindness, the Conservative and Unionist party go on racing for these socialistic measures with the other party, is there any other hope of checking them? Yes, and that hope rests with your Lordships. Your Lordships are the highest court of appeal in this kingdom. Instead of blindly following the Front Bench, whether their measures be sound in principle or not, you should take your stand according to your rightful position in this constitutional State and say, "No! Principles before Party. We have had enough of Government without principles. We intend to put our foot down and pass no measure which is not sound in principle, and, above all, we will not pass a measure which for the first time in our legislation limits the trade of a trading nation, and the hours of free adult labour." I believe that to be our only hope. I am afraid the Government support this Bill. I wish them joy. If they do, all the Bills of a cognate character to which I have referred will be very soon on the Table of your Lordships' House.

And now, when I speak of adult labour I should like just to say one word with regard to myself and my position. It is more than forty years since, in another place, I brought in and carried a Bill which was called The Master and Servant Act. Before that, there was one law for the master and another law for the servant. If the master broke his contract he could only be prosecuted civilly, but if the servant broke his, he was treated criminally. It was my good fortune to be able to carry a Bill which placed the two on an equal footing. Later on, for two years, I had the honour of sitting on the Trades Union Commission. That Commission—I being one of those assenting — gave trades unions the power, which they are now in the habit of abusing by picketing, to combine in the way that might seem to them best. So far I have not shown myself hostile to labour. On the question of Early Closing, I think it was in the early sixties, I had the honour of presiding at a meeting held in St. Martin's Vestry Hall for the purpose of inaugurating an Early Closing Association, but it was a voluntary association. The Duke of Westminster, I recollect, was there, and many others, and that association still exists. I hold in my hand a letter from its President, Sir J. Blundell Maple, in which he states that this sort of legislation will put an end to the voluntary closing of shops which is going on. I am only interested in the principle of the Bill, but here is the opinion of a great trader in the Metropolis, a Member of Parliament, a strong Conservative, and I think his views must have some weight with your Lordships. Sir J. Blundell Maple states that my noble friend's Memorandum attached to the Bill contains a great many statements more or less correct, but leaves out important facts.

What are the important facts? It is true, as my noble friend states, that there has been a Second Reading of a Bill of this kind carried in the House of Commons, but Sir J. Blundell Maple says that it was a catch Second Reading, and that no debate at all took place. What my noble friend has omitted to state is this: that another Bill of this kind was defeated in the House of Commons by three to one in 1888, in which Division Sir J. Blundell Maple and that wise, brave, truthful man in all social questions, the late Mr. Bradlaugh, were Tellers. Therefore, I cannot help thinking that my noble friend in his very full statement would have done well if he had mentioned that little pregnant fact. Sir J. Blundell Maple writes, further, as to the expenses of the working of the Bill, the constant annoyance of visitations, and he states that, if nine o'clock is fixed under the Bill for closing, there will be no rest for the small retail shop keepers, but attempts will be made to fix an earlier hour. I do not think that can be denied. Sir J. Blundell Maple states his determination to work hard to defeat the Bill, and expresses the hope that this grandmotherly legislation will not be allowed to pass your Lordships' House. You have there a much more important practical opinion than mine upon this question. Now it is always said that, however hard the Bill may be on the small traders, all the big traders are in favour of it. Here you have one of the biggest traders in Great Britain opposing the Bill on principle, because it will have the effect of preventing the greater spread of the voluntary movement. At my time of life this legislation cannot much matter to me, although it may matter to those who come after me. I was born free, and I should like to feel that my children and my grandchildren will also be free, but at the pace our rulers are going there is little chance of that. What I might readily do would be to accept the French saying—"*Aprés moi le déluge*," sit quietly by with folded arms and see the game going on between the two Front Benches. But I hold that French maxim to be a most miserable one, and I think there is another which is much more worthy of acceptance—"*Fais ce que doit advienne que pourra*," and for myself, as long as life is left to me, I shall endeavour to fight in this House and elsewhere for what I believe, and what I know, to be right, aye, and in this intance what your Lordships, in your inner consciences, also know to be right.

I have quoted one opinion, that of a member of the other House, to strengthen my case, but I wish to conclude with a quotation which cannot fail to have great weight with your Lordships, as it is from one of the most distinguished members of your Lordships' House. It is a quotation from a speech made ten years ago at the Freemasons' Tavern on the occasion of a dinner under the auspices of the Liberty and Property Defence League. The orator who proposed the toast of the evening said, with reference to the League—

> "I cannot but feel that the principle of this League, which rests upon a basis as true and eternal as the law of gravitation itself, must ultimately prevail."

We might just as well, continued the noble Lord, preach down the law of gravitation as attempt to reverse economic laws, which were independent even of the wisdom of Parliament. He then spoke of liberty and said that the most sacred property a man could possess, and the most inviolable, according to the law of all just States, was his right to dispose of his labour as he liked. If this Bill passes, he will no longer possess that right. The noble Lord concluded—

> "We are on the eve of attempting to prevent grown men working as long as they like. This may be all very right, though at present I cannot think it is, but, whatever it is, it is not liberty."

These words were uttered by a distinguished Member of your Lordships' House—by my noble and learned friend the Lord Chancellor. They are as true now as they were then, and I call upon my noble friend, whose heart I know is with me on this question—I would indeed be surprised if it were not—I call upon him to help me in resisting a Bill which sins against economic law and would take from us and from our children the priceless heritage of liberty.

Amendment moved—

> "To leave out all the words after ('that') and insert ('this House resolves that Legislative interference with freedom of contract and the liberty of labour of full-grown persons is contrary to the hereditary rights of a free people. That these rights are taken away by the Shops (Early Closing) Bill; and this House declines to proceed further with a measure hurtful alike to trade and industry,

which would press cruelly on small shopkeepers and their working-class customers, and for the first time in modern legislation limits the hours of free adult labour.' "—(*The Lord Wemyss.*)

*LORD AVEBURY: My noble friend who has just sat down has made, as usual, a very interesting and vigorous speech. He has referred to a great many subjects—to Irish land legislation, to Tramways Bills, to The Eight Hours Miners Bill, to the Woolwich Election, and to the family coach of my noble friend Lord Spencer, and almost the only subject to which he has hardly alluded at all has been the unfortunate Bill the rejection of which he has just moved. I really cannot imagine from his speech that the noble Earl can have read the Bill. For my own part it seems to me that his Resolution, with the exception of a few words, is a most admirable Resolution; but what in the world it has got to do with the question now before your Lordships' House I have been puzzling over ever since I saw the terms. My noble friend referred to a letter which has appeared in to-day's newspapers from Sir J. Blundell Maple. Well, Sir J. Blundell Maple has consistently opposed all legislation dealing with the hours of labour in shops.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Quite right, too.

*LORD AVEBURY: My noble friend says "quite right." That may be his opinion. But he again cannot have read this Bill. He describes it as a Compulsory Closing Bill which may shut up shops against the will of the shopkeepers. In the first place, the Bill cannot be brought into operation at all unless the local authorities are satisfied that two-thirds of the shopkeepers are in favour of it. Surely, then, it cannot correctly be described as a compulsory Bill. Then he blames me for not referring to the Bill of 1888 in the Memorandum. I did not refer to that because it had nothing whatever to do with this Bill. It was a totally different Bill. It proposed to shut shops everywhere at the same hour. In the discussion on that Bill, Member after Member pointed out that the circumstances of different places, different seasons, and different trades were so varied that you could not fix any single hour of closing as applicable to the whole country, and that you must leave particular localities to deal with the needs of their localities. Acting on the general sense of the House of Commons in that debate, I brought up a Resolution in 1893 upon which this Bill was founded. It was discussed at considerable length and was supported on all sides of the House, and was eventually unanimously adopted. It was on that Resolution that this Bill—of course without Lord Salisbury's Clause—was introduced in 1893. It passed its Second Reading without division, was referred to a Select Committee and passed through that Committee, and was only lost because I had no opportunity of bringing it forward for Third Reading. In 1895 I brought it in again in the House of Commons. It was referred to the Grand Committee on Trade, and passed through that Committee with a few verbal alterations. But again we were prevented from bringing on the Third Reading. What has been the history of the measure in your Lordships' House? Two years ago your Lordships appointed a strong Committee to consider it. I think those of your Lordships who heard what Lord Salisbury said when he agreed to that Committee, will confirm me when I state that the opinion he then expressed was not very encouraging. I am speaking in the presence to-day of several members of that Committee, and they, I think, will corroborate me that the evidence brought before that Committee was so overwhelming that the Committee made a unanimous Report, and it is upon that unanimous Report that this Bill is founded.

I am very sorry to occupy the time of the House in restating the provisions of the Bill, but I may just briefly mention what they are because I am sure nobody who heard my noble friend's speech would have the least idea of the provisions of the Bill, but, on the contrary, would have a most erroneous idea as to the objects for which it has been introduced. The first provision is that nothing whatever can be done under the Bill unless two thirds of the shopkeepers agree as to the hour of closing. If two-thirds of the shopkeepers desire to close earlier they may memorialise the local authority. The second safeguard is that the local authority need not act on the desire of the shopkeepers unless they think it reasonable. In that case they may then go to the Home Office, and if the Home

Office are of opinion that what is suggested is wise, they may lay a Provisional Order on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and if Parliament does not dissent, then the Provisional Order becomes effective. We have never disguised our opinion that the question whether in a particular town the hour of closing should be eight, or half-past eight, or nine o'clock, is one you might very well leave to the shopkeepers and the local authority, and that to bring in the august interference of the Home Office and of Parliament is unnecessary. But your Lordships' House were of opinion that it was necessary. Surely, however, everybody must admit that the safeguards, if they are not unnecessarily full, are, at any rate, very ample in the matter.

My noble friend asks the House to say that legislative interference with freedom of contract is contrary to the hereditary rights of a free people. I quite agree with him. Freedom of contract is really the basis of civilisation, and deeply should I regret any interference with it; but my noble friend omitted to point out in what part of this Bill we interfere with freedom of contract. Then he said the Bill interfered with the liberty of labour of full-grown persons. Where does the Bill interfere with the liberty of labour of full-grown persons?

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: If a shop assistant wishes to work till, say, ten o'clock at night in a shop which has been ordered to close at eight, he or she cannot do so.

*LORD AVEBURY: One of the objections brought against this Bill is that although shops may be shut, there is nothing whatever in the Bill to prevent employees from being worked after the doors of the shop are closed. I have always said that if you made such a provision as that you would be interfering with the liberty of labour, but while we submit that shutting up shops is no more an interference with the liberty of labour than shutting up public houses, we believe that in the long run, if you shut up shops in the way proposed, the shop assistants will be greatly benefited. My noble friend next says the Bill will be hurtful to trade What trade will it be hurtful to? No doubt to some extent the factory legislation has somewhat hampered English trade and commerce, but we put up with it because on the whole we believe that that is a minor evil and that in other ways it does a great amount of good. But in this case the Bill cannot interfere with trade in the least. No shopkeeper will sell a pound of tea or a yard of ribbon less, when this Bill becomes law, than before. The trade of shopkeepers will go on exactly as before. Indeed we had a good deal of evidence before the Committee from shopkeepers to the effect that, in their judgment, they would do more trade, because, if this Bill passed, more money would be spent in the shops and less in the public houses.

My noble friend next contends that the Bill would press cruelly on small shopkeepers. This cannot be; the small shopkeepers are the great majority, and the Bill cannot come into operation unless two-thirds of the shopkeepers are in favour of earlier closing, and the small shopkeepers will certainly not agree to an hour which would be inconvenient to them or to their customers. The small shopkeepers all over the country, who are the most concerned, are our strongest supporters. They are the backbone of the movement. Then my noble friend speaks about the Bill pressing cruelly on the working-class customers. We had before us the secretaries of the Trade Councils of England, Scotland, and Ireland. They all told us that in the opinion of their councils this Bill would not be injurious to the interests of the working classes. Trades Unions all over the country say that the only complaint they make is, that the Bill does not go as far as they would wish. Surely, if the Bill were hurtful to trade and industry, and pressed cruelly on the small shopkeepers, we should have heard something about it. I do not say that the trades unions are always wise advisers of what are the true interests of the working classes, but I do think that in a matter like this, which comes home to them all, you may fairly take it that the trades unions do represent the feelings of the working classes in this country.

What was the accusation which my noble friend, I thought rather ungenerously, brought against Lord Ribblesdale. He said his Bill had been introduced because he knew that this measure would be so popular in the country. For my part, I believe he introduced his Bill with a desire to benefit the class concerned, but at any rate, if this Bill is so popular that it would strengthen any party that brought it in, surely that is not an argument against the Bill, but rather in its favour. Bills of this kind have been before the country for a great many years. They have been discussed in every large city and town; they have been brought before every association of shopkeepers throughout the country, and discussed by them; and, as your Committee report, out of over 300 associations of shopkeepers, there were only two who opposed the Bill. Therefore, you may take it that the opinion of the shopkeepers is overwhelming in its favour. Again, there have been petitions signed by thousands of persons in favour of the Bill, and in the last five years the petitions against it have not comprised 100 signatures. It is no exaggeration to say that there is no measure which could affect so largely the health and happiness of a large section of the people as to which there is such an overwhelming consensus of opinion in its favour.

With regard to the medical evidence, we have had it stated on the highest authority—I see my noble friend Lord Lister opposite, who is a warm supporter of this Bill—that some such measure is absolutely necessary if we are to improve or even maintain the standard of health in our great cities. The Committee of your Lordships' House took a great deal of evidence, and came to a unanimous report. They expressed the opinion that the earlier closing of shops would be an immense boon to the whole of the shopkeeping community—to shopkeepers and shop assistants alike—and that the present hours are grievous and injurious to health, especially in the case of women. It is not only on behalf of the shop assistants that I hope your Lordships will pass this Bill. I speak also as representing the shopkeepers' associations all over the country, and in their name I implore the House to reject the Amendment of the noble Earl on the Cross Benches, and to pass the third reading of the Bill.

LORD RIBBLESDALE: My Lords, as I had the honour of playing a rather disjointed part in the progress of this Bill through the House, perhaps I may be permitted to say a few words. I associate myself with the final remarks which fell from my noble friend, and would ask the House to have nothing to do with the Resolution which has been proposed by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches. I do not, however, agree with Lord Avebury that this is in any sense an admirable Resolution. It would be a very admirable Resolution for a mechanics' institute, but put at this time of the development of civilisation to your Lordships' House it seems to me the kind of Resolution which we should accept with extreme caution. The latter part of it, that which deals with the matter before the House, namely, Lord Avebury's Bill, is entirely subject to anybody being able to define what the hereditary rights of a free people are. I quite understand what the hereditary rights of your Lordships' House are, but when you talk about the hereditary rights of a free people at this time o' day—well, the tax collector's visit and the nearest policeman discount that abstract proposition. Therefore I object to a Resolution which, in the latter part, is precise and deals with a particular question, being governed by what I believe to be an abstraction.

I pass from the general to the particular, the particular being the Bill now before the House. I do not want to repeat myself. I have already spoken on this subject, and I am sure the House must be quite tired of all the *champions* on Shop Bills. The stock of human ideas is extremely limited. I believe Ecclesiastes, Montaigne, Lord Rosebery, and Mr. Arthur Balfour are all working on the same ideas, and it is only by new combinations that any novelty is given to them. I have no such skill of combination at my disposal, and, unlike Mr. Pickwick, I am not a rapid or powerful thinker when I have to make a debating speech. The noble Earl on the Cross Benches made me, so far as I am concerned, the perfectly agreeable target of some of his best arrows. I do not at all take it that there was anything ungenerous in what he said, but he referred in rather a cryptic way to certain letters which, like the strange device in "Excelsior," I am supposed to carry on my breast. I understood that those letters were "C. B." I cannot pretend to say I do not know what he meant by that reference, but if it is to be a case of *In hoc signo vinces*, then, as far as I am concerned, the sooner the better. At all events, their being there gives me no such inconvenience as I believe the scarlet letter gave the hero of Hawthorne's remarkable novel. In the compliments which the noble Earl paid to my party he threw some doubt upon my object in introducing my Bill. Those doubts have been to some extent dispelled by Lord Avebury. What I understood the noble Earl to say was that the only reason I rushed into the arena with a Bill at all was to prevent noble Lords opposite having the credit for passing this measure. I assume that something of the same sort was in the mind of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack when——

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (THE EARL OF HALSBURY): No, I assure you not.

LORD RIBBLESDALE: Perhaps the noble and learned Lord will allow me to say what I was going to say before he assures me of anything? I assume that something of the same sort was in the mind of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack when, on the occasion of what is known as the shunting of my Bill, he said that I had only got it before the House at all by Parliamentary tactics. Everything the noble and learned Lord says has a pregnant meaning, and I submit that his observation must either have meant that or nothing. Therefore I submit that when the Lord Chancellor used the words "Parliamentary tactics" he must have been labouring under something of the same sort of delusion as the noble Earl on the Cross Benches appears to have been when he laid to my charge motives which I knew not of, and said that I introduced my Bill in order to snatch what seems to be really a very insignificant Party advantage. I gave my reasons for my action at the time. I placed my Bill on the Paper of your Lordships' House because I thought it a better measure than the one standing in the name of Lord Avebury. As your Lordships will remember, I laid it upon the local authorities to do what was wanted in their own districts in the matter of the earlier closing of shops. I did so because it seemed to me that that was part of the general policy now being pursued by Government, of co-ordinating everything by giving to local authorities powers to legislate for the needs of their particular districts, and because I thought that the success of any legislation of this kind was largely a question of circumstances and locality, which, presumably, local authorities are the best judges of. The reason why I have never liked Lord Avebury's Bill, though a great deal in it is better than my own, is that the legislation which everybody admits is required for the public advantage must, by the provisions of this Bill, be initiated by a particular class, that particular class not being the class most affected by the long hours but the people who keep the shops open. That is the whole of my objection to Lord Avebury's Bill, and I have seen a great deal to confirm me in that objection. Since the Second Reading of this Bill there have been meetings of the shop assistants at Manchester and at one or two other places, and the proceedings at those meetings, reports of which, have been sent to me, go a long way to qualify the statement which is made in the memorandum that this Bill has the support of the shop assistants, because the shop assistants' unions have said they do not like this Bill. But I do not wish to reopen this controversy. I only rose to put myself right on the personal ground, to disclaim any wish to snatch anything like a party advantage in the matter, and merely to state again that I introduced my Bill because I thought it a better Bill than my noble friend Lord Avebury's. On the other hand, I said, when I introduced my measure, that if I could not get my Bill I would loyally support the Bill standing in the name of Lord Avebury, and in those circumstances I shall vote against the Resolution moved by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches.

On question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the Motion.

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 45; Not Contents, 21.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Abp.
York, L. Abp.
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
Lansdowne, M.
Ripon, M.
Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Camperdown, E.
Ducie, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Lathom, E.
Lytton, E.
Mount Edgcumbe, E.
Romney, E.
Sandwich, E.
Spencer, E.
Stamford, E. [*Teller.*]
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Waldegrave, E.
Churchill, V.
Peel, V.
Carlisle, L. Bp.
Chester, L. Bp.
Avebury, L. [*Teller.*]
Balfour, L.
Chelmsford, L.
Denman, L.
Dunboyne, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Farrer, L.
Kilmarnock, L. (*E. Erroll.*)
Kinnaird, L.
Kinnear, L.
Kinross, L.
Lawrence, L.
Lindley, L.
Lister, L.
Macnaghten, L.
Overtoun, L.
Poltimore, L.
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L.
St. Levan, L.
Sandhurst, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Tweedmouth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Bedford, D.
Abercorn, M. (*D. Abercorn.*)
Lauderdale, E.
Colville of Culross, V.
Aldenham, L.
Allerton, L.
Ardilaun, L.
Blythswood, L.
Headley, L.
Hylton, L.
Lamington, L.
Manners of Haddon, L. (*M. Granby.*)
Newton, L.
Sherborne, L.
Sinclair, L.
Stalbridge, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*) [*Teller.*]
Suffield, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*) [*Teller.*]
Wimborne, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Amendments (privilege) made.

Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY LAW AND PROCEDURE.

The Duke of Bedford, who had given notice, "To call attention to Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act and to Rules of Procedure, Part 2, Section 124, and to the existing system of prerogative courts of inquiry; and to ask if the Commander-in-Chief is empowered to pronounce sentence against an officer upon his statement made not upon oath, and as a witness before a court of inquiry" said: My Lords, in calling attention to certain questions of military law and procedure, I am compelled to quote largely from the Army Act, and for the length of my quotations I feel I must seek your Lordships' indulgence. I propose to illustrate those points which I am anxious to submit for your Lordships' consideration by reference to the case of Colonel Kinloch. Let me say at once that I do not intend to discuss the decision of the Commander-in-Chief. The questions at issue are far wider than the vindication of the character of a particular officer. They involve the discipline of the Army. They affect the position of every man who holds a commission in His Majesty's service. Soldiers do not live under civil law, but they are entitled to have their special law administered strictly in accordance with the Army Act, and upon the broad principles of justice which centuries of experience have established in this country. Their special law is embodied in the Army Act and the Rules of Procedure which contain the contract of service that Parliament makes with officers and men. The terms of that contract cannot be altered by the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State. A company may empower their manager to dismiss their servants, but these summary powers do not justify the manager in breaking the terms of any contract of service between the company and their servants.

In the first place, then, I direct your Lordships' attention to the 42nd Section of the Army Act. This Section lays down the regulations under which officers may obtain redress of their wrongs. The Section reads as follows—

> "If any officer who thinks himself wronged by his commanding officer, and, on due application to him, does not receive the redress to

which he may consider himself entitled, he may complain to the Commander-in-Chief, in order to obtain justice, who is hereby required to examine into the case, and through the Secretary of State for War, to make his report to His Majesty in order to receive the directions of His Majesty thereon."

In the Manual of Military Law, printed by authority of the War Office, the following note is added in connection with this Section—

> "It is the custom of the Service to forward every complaint through the officer commanding the regiment, and an officer would not be justified in deviating from this course unless the commanding officer refused or unreasonably delayed to forward. An officer complaining himself to the general in command should apprise his commanding officer of his doing so, and must observe in the channel of approach to the Commander-in-Chief, each intermediate gradation as a general of brigade or division. A false accusation or statement on preferring a complaint under this Section is punishable under Section 27."

Section 27 of the Army Act provides—

> "That any officer making a complaint when he thinks himself wronged, and knowingly making any false statement, or suppressing any material facts, is liable to trial by Court-martial."

The effect of these two Sections combined is obvious. They enable any officer to prefer a complaint to the Commander-in-Chief by observing the necessary regulations. They impose grave penalties upon an aggrieved officer for any inaccuracy in his complaint. They protect a commanding officer from any charges brought against him behind his back by those under his command, without which protection—and the case of Colonel Kinloch shows it very clearly—his position would be impossible. No subalterns under the command of Colonel Kinloch ever asked to have a wrong redressed. On the 5th of March, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, made the following official statement—

> "On December 12th, 1902, Lord Belhaven the father of one subaltern in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, and Lord De Saumarez, the relative of another subaltern, called on the Commander-in-Chief, and verbally complained that young officers in the battalion had been tried by so-called Subalterns' Courts-martial, not only for offences against regimental etiquette, but for military offences."

This form of conveying a complaint to the Commander-in-Chief is nowhere contemplated in the Army Act. From fresh departures spring new results, and in this instance a conflict of evidence arose in your Lordships' House, an incident upon which I need not dwell. On the 11th March, the Secretary of State for War made the following statement—

> "Lord De Saumarez would never have gone to the Commander-in-Chief had it not been that a relative of his had received notice from the regimental authorities that on the following Monday Mr. Leveson-Gower would be called upon to resign his commission, because he had ceased to be a credit to his regiment."

This second statement changes completely the character of the first, but it is not with the contradictory tenor of these official statements that I am concerned. I take the second statement, and deal with the fact that Mr. Leveson-Gower complained through his relative, Lord De Saumarez, direct to the Commander-in-Chief that he had been called upon to resign his commission, because he was no longer a credit to his regiment. We have it on the authority of the Secretary of State for War, that Lord De Saumarez would not otherwise have gone to the Commander-in-Chief. Colonel Kinloch was not the regimental authority who called upon Mr. Leveson-Gower to resign his commission. That regimental authority must have been the colonel commanding the three battalions. No officer is called upon to resign his commission without some sufficient reason. Briefly, the circumstances were these. Colonel Kinloch, having discovered the abuses consequent upon the Subalterns' Courts-martial, had reported the circumstances to the colonel of the regiment, some of the officers concerned having passed from his command. The colonel of the regiment directed him to deal with the matter. In consequence of the action then taken by Colonel Kinloch, Lieutenant Leveson-Gower asked for a private interview with Colonel Kinloch, who consented to see him, but only in the battalion orderly room and in the presence of the two senior officers of the battalion. On that occasion Lieutenant Leveson-Gower threw himself on the mercy of his commanding officer, confessed to having made false statements concerning him, and asked to be allowed to withdraw them. Colonel Kinloch consented to their withdrawal, but said that the matter had passed from his hands into those of the colonel commanding the regiment. Lieutenant Leveson Gower then appeared in the regimental orderly room before the colonel of the regiment and his regimental adjutant, and repeated the same confession of false statements concerning Colonel Kinloch.

Such are the circumstances which led to Lieutenant Leveson-Gower being asked to resign his commission. His complaints concerning the colonel commanding the regiment, the lieutenant-colonel commanding his own battalion, and the discipline of his brother officers constitute a comprehensive indictment. But all these complaints were referred direct to the Commander-in-Chief through his relative, and have never been subject to Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act, and that in spite of the fact that on two previous occasions, and in the presence of several witnesses, Lieutenant Leveson-Gower had confessed to making false statements concerning his commanding officer. The course adopted threw to the winds all the protection to which, under the terms of the Parliamentary contract, every commanding officer is entitled, and freed the accuser of all responsibility as to the truth of his charges imposed on him by Parliament under Section 27 of the Army Act. Of this statutory protection and statutory liability afforded by the Army Act, commanding officers are naturally jealous. The Secretary of State for War in another place declared that to insist upon the Statute would be a very severe straining of military law. But, my Lords, it is a term, and, in the opinion of commanding officers, it is an essential term of the Parliamentary contract. It is part of the bargain, and, whether Secretaries of State and Commanders-in-Chief like it or not, Parliament must be obeyed and the Statute acted upon. In this connection I would remind the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War of the argument he made use of a short time ago in this House. He justified the refusal of the Commander-in-Chief in the first instance to grant Colonel Kinloch the favour of a hearing by saying—

> "Lord Roberts cannot think it fair to countenance one code of discipline for a regiment which may be favourably situated for access to the authorities, and a different code for one not so situated."

But may I ask the noble Earl this question? Does he think it fair to countenance one code of discipline for the officers of a regiment whose relatives may be favourably situated for access to the authorities, and another code for those whose relatives, by the accident of locality, are not so situated? Parliament plainly intends that a case such as that of Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, an aggrieved officer because he had been called upon to resign his commission, as being no longer a credit to his regiment, which, in his opinion was not the case, should be dealt with under Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act. But the discretionary power claimed and exercised by the Commander-in-Chief of our Army enables him to decide if he will allow the Act to operate. In other words, it enables him to dispense with the Army Act altogether, and to nullify the contract which Parliament has made with officers and men. I beg to ask the noble Earl why Lieutenant Leveson-Gower was allowed to prefer a complaint to the Commander-in-Chief in a manner contrary to Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act, and thus to free himself, as an aggrieved officer, from the responsibility of the truth of his charges, and to deprive his commanding officer of the statutory protection against false statements conferred on him by Act of Parliament?

I now leave Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act and pass on to an entirely different state of matters. Once a Commander in-Chief has adopted a certain form of procedure, then he is bound to carry it out according to the strict letter. He is no longer, in virtue of any discretionary power, outside the Army Act, but he is firmly held within the meshes of the Rules of Procedure laid down by Act of Parliament. Acting on the information conveyed to him on Friday, December 12th, by Lord De Saumarez, who was instructed by Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, the Commander-in-Chief ordered a Court of Inquiry to be convened. That Court of Inquiry met on Sunday, December 14th, and forwarded the information collected on the next day. Now, my Lords, what are Courts of Inquiry. Remember that nothing like them is known in civil life. Courts of Inquiry are of two kinds—statutory and prerogative, but I am only concerned with prerogative Courts of Inquiry. A Court of Inquiry convened by the Commander-in-Chief is of this character. It is not under the sanction of a Statute, but its proceedings are regulated by the

Rules of Procedure, Part 2, Section 124. The members who compose a Court of Inquiry take no oath. They do not, unless so directed by the convening officer, and in this case they were not so directed, take evidence on oath. The witnesses who attend do not give testimony under the sanction of an oath or any legal summons from the Crown. Their information is purely voluntary, and they are invited to speak under the representation that their statements will be received and treated as confidential communications. The whole proceedings are informal and extra-judicial. Until a year ago this was the definition of a Court of Inquiry—

> "A Court of Inquiry has no judicial power, and is in strictness not a Court at all, but an assembly of persons directed by a commanding officer to collect evidence with respect to a transaction into which he cannot conveniently himself make inquiry."

That was changed by an Army Order of April, 1902 into—

> "An assembly of officers directed by a commanding officer to collect evidence and report with respect to a transaction into which he cannot himself conveniently make inquiry."

But can the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War explain why the former definition is no longer applicable? No authority is anywhere conferred on the Commander-in-Chief to pass sentence on any of the material forwarded. Sub-section L says—

> "The proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, or any confession, statement, or answer to a question, made or given at a Court of Inquiry, shall not be admissible in evidence against an officer or soldier, nor shall any evidence respecting the proceedings of the Court be given against any officer or soldier.

Now, in view of that Section, is a Commander-in-Chief empowered to pass sentence, as he did in the case of Colonel Kinloch, upon the statement made by him as a witness before a Court of Inquiry? I must now remind the noble Earl, the Under-Secretary of State for War, of the words he used in your Lordships' House before Easter. The noble Earl said—

> "I desire to emphasise the fact that Colonel Kinloch gave evidence before a Court of Inquiry appointed by Sir H. Trotter, and that it was on that evidence that the Commander-in-Chief formed his opinion."

We know, then, that the Commander-in-Chief did, as a matter of fact, sentence Colonel Kinloch on the statement made by him as a witness before the Court of Inquiry. Therefore, the War Office must hold that the Commander-in-Chief is empowered to take such action. But, my Lords, from whence is derived this authority which over-rides an Act of Parliament and confers upon the office of Commander-in-Chief a despotic power which is beyond all law, and which has never been allowed under our constitution to any single individual in any department of Government? On this point I hope for some information from the noble Earl, the Under Secretary of State for War, because I do not understand how the discretionary powers of a Commander-in-Chief can be used to infringe the provisions of an Act of Parliament. I am confident, however, that when an officer appears before a Court of Inquiry then no Commander-in-Chief and no Secretary of State can deprive him of the assistance of those provisions which Parliament has enacted for the vindication of his character or military reputation.

My Lords, this is no question of military law or military procedure. It is a question of the infringement of the provisions of an Act of Parliament. I propose to quote the various Sub-sections of Rule of Procedure 124, and to show how in each instance in the case of Colonel Kinloch they have been violated. Sub-section F lays down—

> "Whenever any inquiry affects the character or military reputation of an officer or soldier full opportunity must be afforded to the officer or soldier of being present throughout the inquiry, and of making any statement, and of giving any evidence he may wish to give, and of cross-examining any witness whose evidence in his opinion affects his character or military reputation, and producing any witnesses in defence of his character or military reputation."

Your Lordships must remember that Colonel Kinloch appeared before this Court as a witness only. Yet it was on his statement before this Court that the Commander-in-Chief based his decision that Colonel Kinloch was unfit to remain in the command of his battalion. Colonel Kinloch appeared before the Court with the character of a competent commanding officer. The Secretary of State for War said on the 5th March—

> "I may add that Colonel Kinloch is an officer who, apart from recent occurrences, had served with credit at home, and with distinction on active service."

As a result of the proceedings before the Court of Inquiry the Commander-in-Chief bestowed upon him the military reputation of unfitness to continue in the command of his battalion. Now it is a fact that Colonel Kinloch was not allowed to be present throughout the Inquiry. He was not allowed to cross-examine the witnesses, although Mr. Leveson-Gower, his accuser, appeared as a witness before the Court. He was not afforded a full opportunity of making any statement or giving any evidence he might wish to give. He was not even allowed to complete the statement he did make, because the Court of Inquiry stood suddenly adjourned to finish its investigations, and, whilst thus abruptly adjourned, was dispersed. Sub-section C provides that—

> "The Court will be guided by the written instructions of the officer who assembled the Court. The instructions should be full and explicit, and must state the general character of the information required from the Court of Inquiry in their report."

This Section directs that the Court itself must be informed by written instructions what is the specific point of their investigations. That point could not have been the character or military reputation of Colonel Kinloch, for if the Court had been warned that Colonel Kinloch's military reputation was to be determined by his statement they would have proceeded under Sub-section F. The very fact of their not so proceeding was the strongest possible intimation to Colonel Kinloch that his character was not in question. He therefore made his statement, having been assured by the procedure adopted by the Court that his words could not be used to affect his military reputation. Sub-section G reads—

> "It is the duty of the Court of Inquiry to put such questions to a witness as they think desirable for testing the truth or accuracy of any evidence he has given, and otherwise for eliciting the truth."

The Court had been told that Colonel Kinloch's character was not under investigation, therefore they did not examine witnesses with a view to extracting the truth on that point. This is most important because of Lieutenant Leveson-Gower. I must remind your Lordships that Lieutenant Leveson-Gower admitted having made false statements concerning his commanding officer, in consequence of which the regimental authorities asked him to resign his commission. He then preferred a complaint to the Commander-in-Chief in a manner which evaded Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act. He next escaped cross-examination at the hands of Colonel Kinloch because Sub-section F. of Rule of Procedure 124 was violated, and finally avoided that examination to which he would have been subjected at the hands of the members of the Court of Inquiry had they not been misinformed as to the true point of their investigations. The information collected by the Court of Inquiry was forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief. It is here that the extreme hardship of the procedure begins. If the Court of Inquiry forwarded information on which the Commander-in-Chief decided whether the case should be formally tried, no great harm would be done. But it is not so. The Commander-in-Chief at once proceeded to sentence Colonel Kinloch. The duties of a Court of Inquiry have been compared with those of a Grand Jury, who decide whether there is *primâ facie* evidence for the solemnities of a formal trial. But the analogy is altogether false. Whoever heard of a Judge pronouncing sentence on the statement of a witness before a Grand Jury? But that is precisely what the Commander-in-Chief did in this instance in his capacity of judge. I think that there is no one who does not agree with the words of "Clode's Military and Martial Law," page 199. Speaking of these Courts of Inquiry he says—

> "Before anyone is prejudiced by the result, it would appear desirable, if not demanded by justice, that the decision of the judge be communicated and an opportunity of explanation be afforded to him."

The sentence only was communicated to Colonel Kinloch. Neither he nor the Court before which he appeared were ever informed that there was any charge against him. Meantime, circumstances had combined to place the Commander-in-Chief in a position which it is not at all desirable for a Commander-in-Chief to find himself, namely, that before he assumes the position of judge he had heard the *ex parte* statement of a relative of one of the subalterns principally concerned. From the moment that the

Commander-in-Chief had ordered a Court of Inquiry he had assumed judicial functions. I hope that the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War will be able to assure the House that after the 12th of December the Commander-in-Chief allowed no more *ex parte* statements on the merits of the case to be made to him, but confined himself entirely to the channel of information he had himself chosen, namely, the Court of Inquiry. I ask for this assurance because the following facts have come to my knowledge. On the 17th December—that is, two days after the Court of Inquiry had reported, but nearly a fortnight before the decision of the Commander-in-Chief was announced — Lord de Saumarez called on the second lieutenant of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, and informed him that he had come to see his father, but that as his father happened to be out he would do as well. The purport of the noble Lord was to ask if the officer's father had anything to say upon the case which was then proceeding in the Grenadier Guards because, if so, the noble Lord would undertake to lay it before the Commander-in-Chief without the information going first before the colonel of the regiment, and in this way the name of the officer would be left out of the matter. I should add that the officer, with a true sense of discipline and of loyalty to his commanding officer, refused to have anything to do with such a transaction. I make no comment upon this incident, but I cite it to show the grave disadvantage of departing from Section 42 of the Army Act.

Compare, my Lords, the security for the just exercise of the discretionary powers of a Judge and of a Commander-in-Chief. A Judge is a public man in a great and conspicuous situation. Nothing that he does is done in a corner, and in that publicity lies the security for the just exercise of the discretionary power of a Judge. The Commander-in-Chief bases the exercise of his discretionary powers upon a haphazard collection of irresponsible statements made before a secret Court, and upon the information privately conveyed to him by the relatives and friends of officers concerned, the whole transaction being veiled in secrecy, and, moreover, being final and subject to no appeal. Sub-section M. reads—

> "An officer or soldier who is tried by Court-martial in respect of any matter or thing which has been reported on by a Court of Inquiry, and, unless the Secretary of State sees reason to order otherwise, an officer or soldier whose character or military reputation is in the opinion of the Secretary of State affected by anything in the evidence before, or in respect of, a Court of Inquiry, shall be entitled to a copy of the proceedings of the Court, including any report made by the Court, on payment of the actual cost of the copy required, not exceeding 2d. for every folio of seventy-two words."

Under this Section Colonel Kinloch applied on the 12th January for a copy of the Report. On the 15th January he was officially informed in answer that no Report had been made, but on the 20th January a copy of the Report was forwarded to him without comment. Can the noble Earl assure me that the Report was ever read, because, if so, how could its existence be officially denied? Further than this, the Report of a Court of Inquiry is only furnished to officers whose character or military reputation is in the opinion of the Secretary of State affected by its contents. But the whole proceedings of the Court of Inquiry were conducted on the instruction that such was not the case. The Secretary of State in his place in Parliament on 5th March stated:—

> "The General Officer Commanding the Home District at once assembled a regimental Court of Inquiry. The character of Colonel Kinloch was not in question."

The noble Earl, the Under Secretary of State for War, as I have reminded him, wished a short time ago to emphasise the fact that Colonel Kinloch had been heard before the Court of Inquiry. I now wish to emphasise in your Lordships' House the nature of that hearing. Colonel Kinloch then was deprived of that hearing to which he was entitled under the Rules of Procedure. The statement which he made before the Court, and upon which his sentence was based, was made under the assurance conferred by the provisions of an Act of Parliament that it could not be used to affect his military reputation. The Court itself was misinformed as to the real point of their enquiry, and therefore did not conduct their examination of witnesses in the way they would otherwise have done. Colonel Kinloch was never heard in his own defence at all, as the noble Earl implied he had been. He appeared before the Court only as a voluntary witness, and not as a person charged, or to be heard in his own defence. Both he and the Court had been assured that there was no charge against him. In consequence of a debate in the House of Commons in April, 1901, on Courts of Inquiry, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State gave the following promise to Parliament—

> "I will take care to make Courts of Inquiry more formal and to give to each officer the fullest possible opportunity of being heard in his own defence."

That is a very distinct pledge given to Parliament. Why has it been so totally disregarded in the case of Colonel Kinloch? In criminal proceedings you warn a prisoner that his statements may be used against him, and without that warning you cannot use them in evidence. But in military proceedings an officer is assured by the provisions of an Act of Parliament that his statements cannot be used against him, and then the Commander-in-Chief bases his sentence upon them. I beg to ask the noble Earl the following questions. Why were the Rules of Procedure disregarded in Colonel Kinloch's Court of Inquiry? When a Court of Inquiry has been irregularly held, is there any appeal? If there is no appeal, then on whose authority can the Army Act be dispensed with, and of what value is the Army Act to officers and men under our present military administration? It is obvious from the statement printed by the War Office that there was direct conflict between Colonel Kinloch and Lieutenant Leveson-Gower on a matter of fact. Colonel Kinloch states that when Lieutenant Leveson-Gower was asked for his reasons, he said—

> "When you censured me some weeks ago for absence without leave and disobedience of orders, you said to me that you were going to hand me over to the senior subaltern to be dealt with, or words to that effect. This statement was untrue, as the Adjutant can prove."

The circumstances which led to that interview in the orderly room, the previous conduct of Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, and the reasons which induced Colonel Kinloch to ask the senior subaltern to use his influence with Lieutenant Leveson-Gower as regards his general conduct, none of these essential points appear in Colonel Kinloch's published statement, because both Colonel Kinloch and the Court had been assured that the statement he was making as a witness would not be used to affect his military reputation, and was in no sense a statement made in his own defence. I have myself been the senior subaltern of a battalion in the Grenadier Guards, and have been told by senior officers of the regiment to remonstrate with the junior subalterns on their general conduct. The custom of thus appealing to the influence of senior subalterns was the custom of the regiment when I joined it a quarter of a century ago. It was in accordance with that system, for the existence of which Colonel Kinloch is most certainly not responsible, seeing that it existed in the regiment long before he joined, that he asked the senior subaltern to use his influence with Lieutenant Leveson-Gower. Now, in civil proceedings where evidence is thus conflicting, the greatest possible weight is put on the impression formed by the Judge, who has had the witnesses before him, observed their demeanour, and decided which of the two statements is to be believed. The three officers who composed the Court, and had the witnesses before them and observed their demeanour, had formed their opinion and recorded it in writing. Their opinion did not coincide with the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE): What document is the noble Duke referring to? A Court has no right to express an opinion.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: The Court did express an opinion, and in writing.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I think not.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I think the noble Lord will find that they did issue a report, and their opinion did not coincide with the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, who had not seen the witnesses or heard them make their statements, but who had seen the relatives of officers concerned and had heard their *ex parte* statements on the merits of the case. Their report was sent to Colonel Kinloch. He is entitled to use it for his own advantage. But now arises another hardship inseparable from secret Courts. The report affects many other officers besides Colonel Kinloch. Officers respect the private character of the report and proceedings of a Court of Inquiry because they know that, according to the terms of their contract with Parliament, such reports are private and sacred from publication. In another place the Secretary of State for War condemned Colonel Kinloch on the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry. But not a hint did the right hon. Gentleman drop that the report of the Court was favourable to Colonel Kinloch. There is a rule known to everyone, that documents quoted by Ministers must be laid upon the Table of the House. Every man is assumed to intend the necessary consequences of his action. The Government quoted Colonel Kinloch's statement as a witness, and as a foreseen and necessary consequence the statement was published, in spite of the Army Act, which says that no statement made at a Court of Inquiry is admissible as evidence against an officer.

Let me again remind you of the circumstances under which Colonel Kinloch made the statement published by the War Office as evidence. It is the statement of a willing witness, not made upon oath, not made under legal compulsion. It is the statement of a witness who has been assured that his own character is not the subject of inquiry before the Court. It is a statement made by him under the most solemn pledge of confidence conferred by the provisions of the Act of Parliament to three officers well known to him, and is thus couched in language of familiar conversation. Such, then, is the statement which the War Office held out to Parliament and the country as if it were the legal evidence of a man knowing himself to be on his trial before a formal tribunal. I am constrained to say that that publication amounts to a misrepresentation on which I cannot refrain from commenting, and from asking whether this infringement of the Army Act entailing a breach of confidence can be justified by the noble Earl, the Under Secretary of State for War? If anything further is needed to discredit these secret Courts of Inquiry, it would be this action of the War Office. Parliament is aware of the injustice which such secret Courts may perpetuate, and has provided safeguards in the various sub-sections which I have quoted. But are these safeguards provided by Parliament to be swept away at the caprice of the War Office? Remember, my Lords, that without such safeguards Courts of Inquiry violate the principles of Common Law, because, as Lord Coke said—

> "A man may be unjustly accused and shall be without remedy, or defamed and not have any traverse of it."

These words were true of Courts of Inquiry as they were 300 years ago. They are equally true now of the Court of Inquiry as conducted by the War Office in the case of Colonel Kinloch. They are true to-day, because the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War have disregarded the explicit terms of the Parliamentary contract, and violated the Rules established by Parliament for the vindication of the character and military reputation of officers in His Majesty's Army. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

The Earl of HARDWICKE: My Lords, I feel that the House will sympathise with me in having to reply to the speech that has been made by the noble Duke, based as it has been on a Question consisting of about six lines, and to answer which would not have occupied many minutes of your Lordships' time. There is no suggestion in the notice of the Question that the case of Colonel Kinloch would be introduced, and I had a hope, which I believe is shared by the House and the public, that that case had passed from the political arena. The noble Duke has spoken at some length on highly technical matters, and I think I am justified in strongly protesting at the noble Duke's not having done me the courtesy of giving me notice of the subjects with which he was going to deal, because, in a question of this kind, with which dates, regulations, and sections of Acts of Parliament, and Rules of Procedure are concerned, it is obviously necessary to prepare, and carefully prepare, the reply. The noble Duke has availed himself to an unusual extent—indeed, to a greater extent than I have ever heard before in this House—of the licence the House allows, and I ask indulgence if I do not attempt to follow the noble Duke through all the points he has raised, in an endeavour to dispose of some of the sinister suggestions he has made against the War Office and the Commander-in-Chief in respect to the treatment Colonel Kinloch has received. The noble Duke, in discussing Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act found an opportunity for introducing the name of Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, and stating that that officer had made a false statement, and ought to have been proceeded against under these Sections.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. I said that an officer preferring a complaint, whether he makes a false statement or not, should do so under the Section.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I respectfully submit that the noble Duke suggested that Lieutenant Leveson-Gower made a false statement, and from what he said it would be inferred that that false statement was a serious one.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I stated that Lieutenant Leveson-Gower admitted making a false statement; he did so in the presence of many witnesses.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I wish to do the officer the justice of explaining that Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, when asked why he had not complained to his commanding officer of the treatment that certain officers had received in the Grenadier Guards, said—and this is the "false statement"—that he believed Colonel Kinloch was aware of this treatment. But when Colonel Kinloch said he had no knowledge of what was going on, Lieutenant Leveson-Gower said—

> "I am sorry I made the statement, I admit I was wrong."

I do not think the noble Duke is entitled to refer to that as a false statement made against a commanding officer. I think the noble Duke will recognise that the charge against Lieutenant Leveson-Gower is not so serious as he has led the House to believe. With regard to the particular case of the Court of Inquiry, to which the noble Duke referred, I would like to explain that when matters connected with the Grenadier Guards were first brought to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief, he directed the adjutant general to give instructions to Sir Henry Trotter, commanding the Home District, to make an inquiry into all the circumstances. He did not order him to appoint a Court of Inquiry, he merely asked him to inquire and report to him as to what truth there was in the statement made by Lord De Saumarez and Lord Belhaven. The Commander-in-Chief had every intention of appointing a formal Court of Inquiry at Aldershot, but in the meantime the adjutant-general had given Sir Henry Trotter these instructions. Sir Henry Trotter was asked to inquire into the general question of the discipline in the regiment, in reference to officers and to the chain of responsibility; whether within the period of the then commanding officer's tenure of command there had taken place punishments by officers of their comrades, the cause and nature of the punishment, and the names of all concerned; to what extent he (Sir Henry Trotter), or other officers in authority, were aware of what was going on; what steps had been taken, and what decision had been come to, by other commanding officers in connection with these matters; and to report as regards the present case upon all the circumstances in detail. Sir Henry Trotter thereupon, on his own responsibility, formed a regimental Court of Inquiry, and within two days the evidence of the Court was placed in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. The noble Duke referred to the recommendations of the Court.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: The report.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The Court made no report.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: The noble Earl must be in error, for a report was sent to Colonel Kinloch and I have seen it.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I presume that the noble Duke is referring to the covering letter forwarding the proceedings of the Court.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: No, to the report of the Court itself—the report signed by the President.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I can find nothing to indicate that there was any recommendation or report. Indeed, I would point out to the noble Duke that a Court is specially forbidden to make any report.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I cannot help that. The Court did make a report—that report was sent to Colonel Kinloch, and I have seen it.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: It is very difficult for me to deny what the noble Duke says. I cannot quote, because I am not prepared to lay the document on the Table of the House. I can only say that a Court of Inquiry was appointed by Sir Henry Trotter to inquire into the matters which I have read, and that there was no finding and no recommendation of any sort or kind in the report of the Court of Inquiry. There was merely a covering letter from the general officer commanding. With regard to the point that the officer ought to be present during the hearing of the Court, I would observe that the general reference to Sir Henry Trotter and the Court of Inquiry he appointed would have necessitated every officer in the regiment being present during the inquiry.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: Why not?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The Court of Inquiry, I presume, would have been perfectly willing to allow Colonel Kinloch to be present, but he made no such request.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: Colonel Kinloch did not know what was going to happen.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: Colonel Kinloch had every opportunity of being present during the proceedings of the Court if he had wished to avail himself of that right. He did not and, so far as I understand, there was no reason why he should, because there was no direct charge framed against him. It was merely a general inquiry as to matters connected with the regiment. I now come to the most important point in the remarks I have to address to your Lordships on this matter. The noble Duke has asked how it is that the Commander-in-Chief could override Sections of the Act of Parliament, Rules of Procedure, and Regulations by sentencing Colonel Kinloch on the statement which he made, not upon oath, but as a witness before the Court. The Commander-in-Chief did not take action on anything contained in the Army Act, or on any of the regulations to which the noble Duke refers. He acted on the Royal Warrant, Section 98, which provides that should it be considered desirable in the interests of the service to remove an officer from full pay for causes other than misconduct, it shall be in the power of the Secretary of State, upon the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, to place such officer, if he is entitled to half-pay, on the half-pay list, subject to Article 308, which merely refers to the question whether half-pay is to be reduced or not. I do not think anyone will deny that it is absolutely essential that the Commander-in-Chief should have that authority. It is an authority which exists in the Navy, in the Civil Service, and in every business concern. The noble Duke asks whether the Commander-in-Chief has power to pronounce sentence. Of course he has not the power to pronounce sentence—that is, to sentence an officer to fourteen days or three months imprisonment. That is quite another matter, which has nothing to do with the course of action taken by the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief acted, as I say, under the Royal Warrant. Every Commander-in-Chief has had to act under that Warrant over and over again, and to suggest, as the noble Duke does, that the Commander-in-Chief exceeded his authority in having accepted Colonel Kinloch's own statement as to the condition of the regiment, and having acted upon it is, I think, going a little further than the noble Duke would go were he not an old Grenadiersman. I cannot help remarking that it is curious that we should to-night have been listening to the noble Duke explaining to the

House his views as to the amount of authority which should remain vested in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief when it is not so very long ago that he was pointing out in this House that the Commander-in-Chief had not sufficient authority for the proper discharge of his duties. I have merely to say, in conclusion, that, if the noble Duke wishes me to give a more detailed reply to the various questions he has addressed to me this evening, I must ask that notice should be given and the questions placed on the paper.

*EARL SPENCER: I do not propose to enter into the details of the extremely technical, but, as it seems to me, highly important matter which has been brought before the House by the noble Duke, but I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether it would not be more conducive to a thorough knowledge and understanding of the matter that the debate should be adjourned than that it should proceed now. The noble Duke has made an exceedingly able and important speech; he has brought forward some very strong arguments in support of his attack on the action of the Commander-in-Chief and the manner in which the Court of Inquiry has been held. How has that been met? I do not, for a moment, say that the noble Earl has not met it as well as he possibly could, but he began his speech by saying that he was not in the least degree aware that the particular case to which the noble Duke referred were going to be made the subject of debate to-night. He said he could have answered the Question as it stood on the Paper in a few words, but that it would be extremely difficult for him to answer forthwith the detailed attack which had been made. Moreover, the noble Earl has been repeatedly contradicted on matters of fact. In the circumstances I venture to think we ought to have a further declaration on the matter. So far as I am able to judge, I hardly think the answer that has been given is a complete answer to the noble Duke. It is not always necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to be in his place, to answer any particular attack himself, but it was the case the other day that Lord Roberts came down to the House, and replied on his own behalf in a matter that was then brought up. I understand from the noble Earl that no one anticipated that the particular questions referred to would have been brought forward, and in all the circumstances, the Government not being in a position to satisfactorily and thoroughly reply to the statements made, I think the discussion should be adjourned.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): On behalf of the Government I should certainly object to the simple adjournment of the debate. As a matter of fact, there is no question on which the adjournment could be moved. I think my noble friend the Under Secretary of State for War and His Majesty's Government have very great reason to complain of the course which has been taken by the noble Duke, who put on the Paper one or two abstract questions of a kind which it would have been perfectly simple to deal with, and then made a long and elaborate statement as to matters of which he had not given the smallest notice. I am perfectly willing, if the noble Earl opposite, or if any Member of the House desires, to discuss further the case of Colonel Kinloch, the treatment which he received and the whole history of the case, on the understanding that ample notice is given specifying the documents and the principal facts to which it is desired to call attention.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I should like, after the speech we have just heard, to know in what position we stand. The noble Duke has told us that this is the case of Colonel Kinloch.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Which Duke are you referring to?

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: The noble Duke below me (the Duke of Devonshire) has said that this is the case of Colonel Kinloch.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I said that the case which has been brought forward by the noble Duke, the Duke of Bedford, was the case of Colonel Kinloch.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: To my mind, and, I think, to the minds of many of your Lordships, this is the case of His Majesty's Government and the Commander-in-Chief. Colonel Kinloch's name has necessarily been introduced into it, but the question is not whether Colonel Kinloch did or did not do particular things, or whether he has or has not been properly punished. That would be the case of Colonel Kinloch. In this case the real issue is whether His Majesty's Government, the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief have utterly disregarded Acts of Parliament and the regulations of the Service and substituted a procedure of their own which gives the accused no chance of fair play. The question which the noble Duke asks, and which I should have thought was fairly expressed, was whether this was legal and whether it had the approval of your Lordships' House. It appears to me to be something like an attempt to, vulgarly speaking, draw a red herring across the scent for His Majesty's Government to protest, after the speech of the noble Duke, that they were not prepared to go into all the circumstances of Colonel Kinloch's case. I should like to ask if the Government are unprepared at the present moment to answer the two or three plain questions submitted, and to which I must say the Under-Secretary has not yet replied. The Army Act lays down a certain course of procedure—that when an officer has anything to complain of he should report to his commanding officer, and he is at liberty, if he cannot get satisfaction from his commanding officer, to request that his complaint may be forwarded to the highest authority. I would ask His Majesty's Government this plain question—Why, when these noble Lords came to the Commander-in-Chief with a complaint, did he not follow the usual, the plain and straightforward, course? Why did he not say, "If the officers have anything to complain of let them make their report to the commanding officer of the battalion, and, if he cannot satisfy them, let the complaint be forwarded to me?" Why was that course not adopted? The only shadow of a reason which has been alleged is this, that one of the noble Lords who went to the Commander-in-Chief discovered that one of these subalterns was to be dismissed from the battalion within a very few days. That is no reason at all, for the Commander-in-Chief could very well have stopped any action of that sort by a telegram until the officer had had an opportunity of making his complaints in the usual course. That is one perfectly inexplicable feature in this case, and one which I should have thought His Majesty's Government, without much preparation, might have managed to answer. Now, my Lords, what are the evils which His Majesty's Government have brought about by this course of procedure? The Secretary of State for War waxed very indignant over the charge suggesting that he and the Commander-in-Chief had been influenced by the rank and social position of the complainants. That is not an accusation which will be made in this House; but can the Secretary of State for War wonder very much if those who have not the fine feelings which possess him, and which, no doubt, possess your Lordships, should conceive some sinister suggestion when, in the absence of all possible and conceivable reasons for not adopting the usual course, the Commander-in-Chief goes out of his way to adopt an unusual course? I think it is most undesirable that great officers of State and distinguished officers of the Army should do anything which, even to the most uninstructed, should lead to the belief that they are actuated by anything but the high motives by which we know them to be actuated. That is in itself a reason why your Lordships should demand to know why the Commander-in-Chief departed from the usual course open to him. Then we have exactly the same question as to the reasons for the Court of Inquiry instituted by Sir Henry Trotter.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I have told you.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: The noble Earl says he has told us. I do not wish to misrepresent the noble Earl, but, as far as I could gather, I understood him to say that it was a blunder of the adjutant-general's.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I told the House that the Commander-in-Chief, through the adjutant-general, asked the officer commanding the Home District, Sir Henry Trotter, to report to him as to whether there was any truth in the statements made by Lord Belhaven and Lord De Saumarez; that Sir Henry Trotter, perfectly within his rights, and on his own responsibility, summoned a regimental Court of Inquiry which took evidence from all the officers concerned, and that Sir Henry Trotter within two days forwarded that evidence, including the evidence of Colonel Kinloch, to the Commander-in-Chief.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: What I want to know is, was that what the Commander-in-Chief intended, or was it not? If it was the intention of the Commander-in-Chief to investigate this by a Court of Inquiry, what we want to know is whether the career of an officer is to be at the mercy of the finding of a Court of Inquiry, at which he has no right to be present, and to cross-examine witnesses, and at which he is asked to make a statement as a witness, and is then, as the noble Duke fairly pointed out, condemned upon his own evidence? Is this fair play? So far as I understand, it is not military practice. I hope it is not; but, if it is, so much the worse. It is not fair play. The noble Earl the Under Secretary spoke as if being put on half-pay was merely an arrangement which everybody admits must be in the power of the Commander-in-Chief. The discretion of the Crown to deal with an officer, on the advice of the Commander-in-Chief, without giving any reasons of any sort or kind is a power which must exist; but this is a different case. Here is a case where there is an inquiry, and at that inquiry charges are made which the officer has no possibility of rebutting. I maintain that a man should not be dismissed upon accusations and charges which he has no power of rebutting.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: No charges were made.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Then why was he retired? He was retired because, in the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, he was unfit to command the regiment. Is not that a charge?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: No.

The Earl of Hardwicke.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Not a charge when it is stated on the evidence of a Court of Inquiry, that an officer is unfit to command a regiment? Well, I have never had the honour of serving in the Army, but I think we all have some idea of the abstract principles of justice, and I do say that a man has no right to be condemned—and to deprive a distinguished officer of the command of his battalion is to condemn him—on evidence taken before a Court of Inquiry—and if the action taken was not on the evidence given before that Court of Inquiry there was no reason for holding the inquiry—when he was not present, had no power to cross-examine witnesses, and, indeed, had no *locus standi* before that Court at all. The noble Earl said that if Colonel Kinloch had asked he would no doubt have been allowed to be present. He did not ask to be present because he did not know that these strange consequences were going to follow from the holding of the Court of Inquiry. The noble Duke behind me has already told your Lordships that a Court of Inquiry for many purposes occupies the position of a grand jury, and I do say that it is not justice, whether it be a practice or not—and I do not believe it is a practice—that a man, on the finding of a grand jury, that is to say, on the finding of a Court at which he is not present and cannot cross-examine witnesses, should be visited by any penalties. I hope this matter will not be allowed to rest, and that some noble Lord who is better acquainted than I am with the details of the Service, and who possesses the knowledge which military experience alone can give, will raise this point later on in some form or other, and pursue it to a conclusion. This question is not raking up again the case of Colonel Kinloch. It is a question of the procedure of the Army, and whether the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State can or cannot override Acts of Parliament and the whole custom of the Army. If they cannot—and I believe they cannot—I think it must be admitted that there has been a gross miscarriage of justice. I believe I am right in saying that, when a private soldier is tried by Court-martial, if it is afterwards found that that Court was improperly constituted, the sentence is annulled, and the man goes free. I cannot see why, in justice, the same treatment should not be meted out to officers. The serious part of the case is that it affects the position of every officer in the Service. There has been a great deal of nonsense talked of late outside, about its being necessary that officers should not think they had a vested interest in their commissions. The question is not whether they have a vested interest in their commissions, but whether the Army is a profession which a man can look forward to with a certainty that so long as he keeps within the four corners of the Acts of Parliament which govern the powers and authority of his superiors, he is safe; or whether, on the other hand, he is to be at the caprice of any Commander-in-Chief or Secretary of State. I trust this matter will not be allowed to rest.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The specific question sought to be raised by the noble Duke ought to be placed on the Paper and notice given of it in terms. For a considerable time, under the form of an abstract question, the House has been discussing facts which are in dispute. What specific charges is it desired to make against the Commander-in-Chief, the War Office, and the Government? If it is true that a person has been punished without being heard, no one will say that it was a proper thing; but if that is the allegation, why is not a Motion brought forward challenging the Act? As it is, the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief has been challenged, without any notice being given. If the matter is to be discussed at all, it ought not to be in this interjectional form of abstract questions. The noble Duke's Question on the Paper assumes that judicial procedure is applicable to matters to which it is not applicable; that sentence was pronounced unjustly; and that what a man had said was not evidence against him. I should have said that one of the best sources of evidence in the world was what a man said. Knowing nothing about the particular case in question, and speaking only in the abstract I should say that if I were Commander-in-Chief, and had to form an opinion on an officer's fitness to command, the fact that that officer was found to give evidence in such a way as to prove his unfitness would be sufficient for me, without any other form of procedure. I do not say that that was the case in this instance; but it shows the unfortunate way in which the subject has been introduced. Let the noble Duke submit the broad proposition that Colonel Kinloch has been ill-used, and that the Commander-in-Chief has disregarded the Regulations. The abstract question before the House can lead to nothing but loose discussion, in which all are at cross-purposes, and one person does not understand the allegation denied by another. Nothing that has occurred precludes the possibility of the question being raised on specific allegations, when your Lordships would be able satisfactorily to discuss it.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I agree with much that has fallen from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, but I would impress upon your Lordships that it is absolutely impossible to leave the question where it stands, if only in justice to the Commander-in-Chief. No official answer to the serious detailed charges which have been brought against the Commander-in-Chief has been made on behalf of His Majesty's Government. I do not blame the noble Earl the Under Secretary for that, because the notice on the Paper was, no doubt, so vague that he had not an opportunity of preparing an answer, but those charges are of the gravest kind, and it is necessary in justice to the Commander-in-Chief that some reply should be made.

SOMALILAND.

*EARL SPENCER: I beg to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House the latest information as to Somaliland. From what has appeared in the public Press there can be little doubt that a very serious disaster has occurred to the forces that have been employed in that country. I do not propose to discuss the subject on this occasion. I referred to it in the remarks I made on the Address, and I then expressed a fear that the difficulties had not been sufficiently faced by His Majesty's Government, and that the results might prove much more serious than they anticipated. The question will, no doubt, be debated in Parliament, and for the present I shall confine myself to asking the Question standing in my name.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): The War Office has already given to the Press all such information as can at present be given in reference to recent operations in Somaliland. At the same time, I can well understand the desire of the noble Earl to be fully informed with regard to these important events, and we shall take care that the desire shall not be lost sight of. I might, perhaps, add that General Manning has been called upon for a full report upon the situation in Somaliland as it at present presents itself.

RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

*EARL SPENCER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can lay on the Table any despatches in regard to the communications that are reported to have passed between the Russian and Chinese Governments. This is, perhaps, a more delicate question than the one I have just asked, but the subject to which it refers is one in which the country takes a deep interest. There have been various reports as to the notes that have passed between the Russian and Chinese Governments, and, although I fully recognise the delicacy of the question, I can assure the noble Marquess that any statement he can see his way to make as to what is going on with regard to Manchuria will be heartily welcomed.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The question to which the noble Earl has referred is engaging the most serious attention of His Majesty's Government. The question, no doubt, refers to the rumours which have lately been prevalent as to the conditions which the Russian Government is insisting upon in connection with the evacuation of a portion of Manchuria. There is some doubt as to the actual facts of the case, and we are endeavouring to clear that doubt up; but for the moment I hope that the noble Earl will not press me for information. The matter is one which concerns several Powers, and it would be most inconvenient that while communications are passing any statement should be made, or any Papers laid upon the Table of the House. At the same time, I recognise that the noble Earl has a right to expect that we should inform the House as soon as possible, and I do not anticipate that the silence which I am obliged to keep at this moment need be of long duration.

NEW BILLS.

BETTING BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Betting Acts, 1853, and 1874, and for other purposes was presented by the Lord Davey; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday the 14th of May next. (No. 35.)

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.]. (No. 36.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1902, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (EAST HAM, &c.) BILL [H.L.]. (No. 37.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1900, to enable the School Boards for East Ham, Lower Michaelstone, Manchester, and Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

Was presented by the Viscount Churchill (for the Earl Vane (*M. Londonderry*); read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 28*th April*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Charing Cross, Euston and Hampstead Railway Bill (King's consent signified), read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

City and South London Railway Bill (Prince of Wales's consent signified), read the third time, and passed.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill, as amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill, as amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill, read a second time, and committed.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).

Sir **John Brunner** reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills: That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, 6th May.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

Mr. **Nicol** reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills: That the parties promoting the Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill had stated that the evidence of Mr. Samuel Hood Cowper Coles, J.P., Land Agent, of Penmyarth, Crickhowell, Brecon, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Samuel Hood Cowper Coles do attend the said Committee to-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Mr. Samuel Hood Cowper Coles do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills to-morrow, at half past Eleven of the clock.

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill; Scarborough Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee:—

1. "That, in the case of the Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

Resolutions agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for enlarging the powers of Investment of the Life Association of Scotland; and for other purposes." [Life Association of Scotland Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Hexham Gas Company." [Hexham Gas Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the objects and powers of the Lima Railways Company, Limited; and for other purposes. [Lima Railways Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for further extending the powers of the India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company, Limited." [India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for an increase and re-arrangement of the share capital of North's Navigation Collieries (1889), Limited; and for other purposes." [North's Navigation Collieries Bill (Lords).]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Faversham Gas Company; and for other purposes." [Faversham Gas Bill (Lords).]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Exeter Railway Company to acquire additional lands; to revive and further extend the time for the completion of their authorised railways; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Exeter Railway Bill (Lords).]

Life Association of Scotland Bill [Lords]; Hexham Gas Bill [Lords]; Lima Railways Bill [Lords]; India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [Lords]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [Lords]; Faversham Gas Bill [Lords]; Exeter Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

Petition from Lewes, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Park Lane; Tibshelf; B. Winning; Scholes; Cadeby Main; Kiveton Park; Edge Green; Haydock; Ashton Moss; South Normanton; Pye Hill; Shipley Woodside; Denby; Codnor; Cossall Lodge; Pentrich; Stanley Common; West Hallam; Bower (No. 1); Morton; Broxtowe; Cinder Hill; Hulton; Whitwell; Bruntcliffe; Mirfield; East Ardsley; Billinge; Chickenley Heath; Morley Main; Plumtree: Newstead; Wath Main; Kirkby; Langton; Annesley; High Park; Bentinck; Moor Green; Digby; Stanton Hill; New Hucknall; New London; Brierley Hill; Portland; Bestwood; Linby; and Kearsley Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Faversham; New Windsor; Droitwich; Pontefract; Bodmin; Hyde; Dewsbury; Ossett; St. Ives; and Rochester; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Paisley; and Neilston; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

GROCERS' LICENCES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petitions against: from Plymouth; Lewes (two); and Margate; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Balmaclellan; Dalry Galloway; Glasgow; Alexandria; Paisley; and Fenwick; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association and Fellowship Union in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Cathcart, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.

Petition from Ossett, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

Petition against: from Earl's Court; and Gravesend; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Petition from Halifax, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Edinburgh (seven); Glasgow (two); Greenock; Paisley; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions for alteration of law: from Reading; Merthyr Tydfil; St. Helens; Salford; and Newton and Llanllwchaiarn; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: from West Ham; and Stepney; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Upton Park, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Polegate; St. George's in the East; Erith; and Wigan; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions from Cathcart, against; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Park Lane; Tibshelf; B. Winning; Scholes; Cadeby Main; Kiveton Park; Edge Green; Haydock; Ashton Moss; South Normanton; Pye Hill; Shipley Woodside; Denby; Codnor; Cossall Lodge; Pentrich; Stanley Common; West Hallam; Bowers (No. 1); Morton; Broxtowe; Cinder Hill; Hulton; Whitwell; Bruntcliffe; Mirfield; East Ardsley; Billinge; Plumtree; Newstead; Bentinck; Wath Main; Annesley; High Park; Brierley Hill; Moor Green; Digby; New Hucknall; Stanton Hills; New London; Kirkby; Portland; Bestwood; Linby; Kearsley; Langton; and Garswood Hall Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BURGHCLERE (HANTS) (CHARITY).

Return ordered, "of the Correspondence between the Trustees of the Poor Allotment of Burghclere, Hants, and the Charity Commission respecting the recent proposals to sell the land comprised in that allotment."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Grants in respect of Continuation Classes in Crofting Districts, 1902–3.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord Advocate if he will state how many schools in the Highland crofting counties received grants in respect of continuation classes during the year 1902–3, and the amount paid to these schools.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) During the financial year 1902–3 the sum of £2,455 17s. 8d. was paid for continuation classes conducted in seventy-two schools in the Highland crofting counties.

Prize-Firing of Cruiser "Pique" and Sloop "Rosario."

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state what were the number of rounds fired from the 6-inch and 4·7 guns and hits secured by the cruiser "Pique" during her recent prize-firing.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state the number of rounds fired from the 4-inch guns and hits secured during her recent prize-firing by the sloop "Rosario."

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) I have already stated in the House that the Board of Admiralty do not consider it to be in the public interest to give detailed particulars with respect to the shooting of individual ships, especially in view of the fact that similar particulars are not available in the case of any foreign Navy. The Board of Admiralty are fully aware of the necessity of obtaining a high standard of shooting in the Navy, and all necessary measures are being taken to secure the desired end. Every information as to the general progress of the Navy, as apart from the particulars of individual ships, will at all times be furnished to Parliament.

Admiralty Expenditure on Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state the present annual expenditure by the Lords of the Admiralty upon wireless telegraphy.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The present average expenditure upon wireless telegraphy is about £20,000 per annum.

Niclausse Boilers in the Navy.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state the results of the experiments of the Admiralty with the Niclausse boiler.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The results of the experiments with the Niclausse boiler are given in Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1380], of 1902, entitled "Report on Trials of H.M.S. 'Sheldrake,' H.M.S 'Seagull,' H.M.S. 'Espiégle,' and H.M.S. 'Fantôme.' "

Lottery at Thomastown School, Kilkenny.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the drawing of prizes in connection with the schools and convent at Thomastown, County Kilkenny; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) At my right hon. friend's request I will reply to this Question. It has been the settled policy and practice of the Executive in Ireland for many years not to prosecute, at the suit of the Crown, persons who conduct lotteries at bazaars held for *bonâ-fide* charitable objects, inasmuch as their acts, though possibly technical violations of the law, are not at all within the mischief aimed at by the several Lotteries Acts. This rule has been applied irrespective of creed and class.

Reduction of Light Dues.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the accumulation in the amount of the Light Dues Fund to £345,000 or thereabouts, it is intended, and, if so, when, and to what extent, to reduce the scale of light dues.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) It is proposed to reduce the scale of light dues for the current financial year, but I cannot yet say to what extent.

St. Louis International Exhibition.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether anything, and, if so, what, has been and is being done as to British co-operation in the International Exhibition at St. Louis; whether any, and, if so, what, Commission has been or is to be appointed; and what grant is to be made for the purposes.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve of the appointment of a Royal Commission, with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales as President, to advise as to the organisation of the British exhibit. The appointment of the Commission is notified in the London Gazette of the 24th instant. His Majesty's Government have decided that a sum of £30,000 shall be included in the Estimates for the year 1903–4 for the purpose of the Exhibition. A decision as to what further amount shall be provided is deferred until it is ascertained to what extent a larger sum may be required. The office of the Commission is at 47, Victoria Street, S.W.

Superannuation Allowance of John Keane, of Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why a superannuation allowance has been refused to John Keane, who has been for the last seventeen years in charge of the Barna Male School in the borough of Galway.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) The Commissioners of National Education notified to the Teachers' Pension Office on the 30th October, 1901, that Mr. John Keane had resigned his position as teacher in Barna National School. This was confirmed by Mr. Keane, who applied for and received on the 12th December, 1901, the repayment of his pension premiums under Pension Rule 11 (2). Two months later he wrote claiming a disablement pension, and in reply was informed that as he had been repaid his premiums he had no further claim upon the pension fund.

Irish Land Purchase—Default of Payment.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amounts in each year from the grants-in-aid of local taxation on account of defaults in payment of instalments by tenant purchasers between 1891 and 31st March, 1903; and whether, and if so how, the Guarantee Fund has been recouped those amounts.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The amounts withdrawn from the Guarantee Fund in respect of instalments accrued due to 1st November and in arrear on 12th February in each year are as follows:—Year ended 12th February, 1893, £404 15s. 5d.; 1894, £2,289 0s. 4d.; 1895, £2,857 12s. 10d.; 1896, £2,811 11s. 10d.; 1897, £2,824 18s. 8d.; 1898, £2,210 5s. 11d.; 1899, £3,310 1s. 11d.; 1900, £4,555 16s. 2d.; 1901, £5,930 10s. 11d.; 1902, £7,852 19s. 9d.; 1903, £8,383 18s. 11d. The arrears have been reduced to £3,051 12s. 2d. at the present date, and there is every reason to expect that the sums due to the fund will be repaid thereto. The arrears when recovered are repaid to the fund.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

15-Pounder Gun.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the improved pattern of 15-pounder issued to the new batteries in 1899 is the same gun as the 1885 pattern, with the addition only of a spade to take recoil; and what is the number of aimed shots that can be fired per minute by the 1885, 1899, and quick-firing Ehrherdt guns respectively.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The 15-pounder gun of the 1899 pattern is not the same pattern as that of 1885, though it fires the same ammunition. It is not usual to give the number of aimed shots fired per minute, but the results show a steady progress in the rate of fire in accordance with the newness of the pattern.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): When the right hon. Gentleman speaks of an improved gun does he mean the same with the change suggested in the Question.

*MR. BRODRICK said he could not go into technicalities but parts of the gun had been improved and it fired quicker.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Improved by the opening of the breach in the opposite direction. It is not a quick-firing gun I take it.

*MR. BRODRICK: No, it is not a quick-firing gun in the sense generally understood.

Army Returns.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Returns respecting the Volunteers, Royal Garrison Regiments, Army Reserve, and Military Works, which appear on today's Notice Paper.

The Returns referred to are as follows—

Volunteers—Address for Return respecting the Volunteers, in the following form:—

	Officers.	Men.	Battalions.
Number of Volunteer battalions			
Number of battalions qualified under new regulations for inclusion in Army Corps Scheme			
Number required by Scheme			
Number of efficients who have earned Capitation Grant, 1902			
Strength of Volunteers—			
1st day of January, 1903			
1902			
1901			
1900			
1899			
Shortage of Officers—			
1903			
1899			

Military Works and Stores—Address for Return respecting Military Works and Stores, in the following form:—

	Military Stores.	Artillery.	Fortifications.	Barracks.
Amount of money expended:—				
1899				
1900				
1901				
1902				
1903				

Army Reserve—Address for Return showing the state of the Army Reserve, in the following form:—

	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Strength, 1st day of January, 1899			
Strength, 1st day of January, 1893			
From 1st day of January, 1899, to 1st day of January, 1903—			
Killed in action			
Died			
Discharged through disease			
Discharged for misconduct			
Re-engaged to serve in India			
Re-engaged during demobilisation with units at Home			
Number who have less than two years to serve in the Reserve			
Number who will complete Army service and pass into the Reserve next year			
Number of Reservists required under the Army Corps Scheme on mobilisation of the Six Army Corps			

Royal Garrison Regiments.—Address for Return showing the annual cost of the Royal Garrison Regiment now stationed at Malta; the number of cases of drunkenness, of courts-martial, and of diseases treated in hospital which have occurred within the last twelve months; the number of women and children borne on the strength of the Regiment; and a comparison of these figures with the respective figures in any particular Regular Battalion in the same garrison; the number of Royal Garrison Regiments sanctioned by Parliament; and the number as yet formed.

*Mr. BRODRICK: My hon. friend has been already told that these Returns will be granted, except in the case of that for the Army Reserve, some details of which cannot be granted. Perhaps he will be good enough to see that the form of the address is duly corrected.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Do I understand that the Return will be granted subject to this modification.

*Mr. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir.

Employment for Discharged Soldiers.

Mr. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of the Superintendent of Police for the Holland Division of Lincolnshire to the Standing Joint Committee of the Holland County Council that the increase in the number of cases of begging from sixty-four in 1901–2 to 103 in 1902–3 was due to the number of soldiers returning from South Africa and the scarcity of work; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps to find employment for discharged soldiers.

*Mr. BRODRICK: My attention has not been drawn to this matter, nor have I any reason to think that the increase in begging cases was due to the number of soldiers returning from South Africa who were unable to obtain employment. The information in the hands of the War Office as regards this question is set out somewhat fully in the Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting.

Late Captain Mackenzie, Norfolk Regiment.

Mr. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the evidence given at the inquest on the late Captain Charles Douglas M'Kenzie, of the Norfolk Regiment, to the effect that the deceased officer had been worried on account of his not having received his pay from the Imperial Yeomanry; and whether he can take steps to expedite the payment of arrears of pay to officers and men of the Imperial Yeomanry.

*Mr. BRODRICK: This unfortunate officer left his accounts in the hands of his pay-sergeant. These accounts, which were in a state of great confusion, have required considerable time to balance. It became apparent that a large cash credit on which Captain Mackenzie had drawn was non-existent, and two senior officers of the Pay Department went into the matter with him, and explained the position to him, as he had kept no records. No blame whatever attaches to the War Office in the matter, and the confused condition of some of these Yeomanry accounts is the main reason why some of the arrears of pay have not been issued. All possible despatch is being employed.

The Late Sir Hector Macdonald.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the circumstances which led Sir West Ridgway, the Governor of Ceylon, to entrust the inspection and review at the Coronation Parade to the late General Sir Hector Macdonald; will he state whether this action was taken with the sanction of the Colonial Office; and whether it was the duty of the Governor to be present at this function.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): The late Sir Hector Macdonald was present at the Coronation Review at Colombo, because he was at that time the General Officer commanding the troops in Ceylon. It was physically impossible for the Governor to attend, as he was at the time a royal guest at the Coronation here. In his absence the Lieutenant-Governor was present. The Colonial Office had nothing to do with the local arrangements, and was not consulted.

British Commerce in Western Persia—The River Karun.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can give the values and bulk, during the last five years, of the total traffic on the River Karun into Western Persia; and whether any, and if so what, steps have been taken to promote the use of that route for commerce by British and Indian traders.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): Following are the values of the imports into the Karun ports taken from the trade reports of His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mohammerah; 1897, £26,030; 1898, £72,817; 1899, £62,971; 1900, £100,437; 1901 (Ahwaz only), £72,358. It would be impossible within the limits of a Question to deal with the statistics of bulk, but I would refer the hon. Member to the following reports in the Annual Series, Nos. 2186, 2346, 2442, 2631, 2803. The question of the best means of encouraging the use of this route by British and Indian traders has the constant attention of His Majesty's Government. Steps are being taken for the appointment of a British Vice-Consul to reside at Ahwaz on the Karun.

Labour Recruiting for the South African Mines.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Blantyre Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce has entered a protest against recruiting for labour for mines on the ground that the labour supply in the British East Africa Protectorate is already insufficient for local requirements; and, in view of this protest, will he consider the desirability of discouraging any attempt to obtain labour for the South African mines from this source.

LORD CRANBORNE: A petition has been received from the British Central Africa Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce to the effect stated. The experimental recruiting of 1,000 natives from the British Central Africa Protectorate has already been authorised, and pending the result of this experiment it is not proposed to take any further steps in this direction.

The Operations in Somaliland.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether it is not a fact that the whole of the territories in which General Manning's operations are taking place are outside the boundaries of British Somaliland and within the sphere of influence of either Italy or Abyssinia.

LORD CRANBORNE: The answer shortly to the Question of the hon. Gentleman is in the affirmative, but the troops which are acting on the lines of communication under General Manning are operating within the British sphere.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Is there any precedent for the employment of British troops in territories which are outside our boundaries, without consultation with, or sanction obtained from, Parliament.

LORD CRANBORNE: That is a matter which I shall have to inquire into.

Medical Practice at Kobé.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that Mr. Samuel T. Knaggs, M.D., F.R.C.S.I., applied in December last to practice his profession at Kobé, Japan, but was informed by the British Consul at Kobé, that the licence could not be granted until investigation regarding the diplomas had been made in this country; and whether, seeing that Dr. Knaggs was accredited to the British Consul at Kobé by the Premier and Chief Secretary of the State of New South Wales as having held Government appointments in that State, will he ascertain why the British Consul did not take steps to satisfy the Japanese authorities as to Dr. Knaggs' *bonâ fides* without awaiting the result of inquiries in this country.

LORD CRANBORNE: I have no information on this subject, but His Majesty's Consul at Kobé will be requested to report the facts.

Fines in Belfast Factories.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Squire, His Majesty's Inspector of Factories, *v.* Messrs. McBride and Williams, of Belfast, under the Truck Act of 1896, Section 2, Sub-section (1), in which it was shown that two girls were fined for damaged work to an amount in excess of the wage which they could have received for the work had it been perfect, while a third, of fourteen years of age, was fined nearly a third of her weekly wage; if so, will he state whether an appeal will take place; and whether, seeing that a series of such cases has shown that the section does not fulfil the purpose of protecting the workers from fines which are disproportionate to their earnings, he will consider the advisability of proposing an amendment of the law.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.): This case is engaging the careful attention of the Department, but no final decision has been arrived at. The necessary steps for an appeal have, however, been taken in case that course should be determined upon.

Wireless Telegraphy for British Light Vessels.

*MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will explain why the light vessels round the coasts of the British Islands have not been fitted with the same wireless telegraphy apparatus as has been fitted to His Majesty's ships and certain mail steamers.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have explained to my hon. and gallant friend that up to the present time, in spite of careful negotiation, the Board of Trade have been unable to effect arrangements for a system of wireless telegraphy from shore to ship, and ship to shore. The same difficulties have not arisen in the case of communication between ships at sea. I can assure my hon. and gallant friend that I attach great importance to this subject, which has engaged my personal attention, and that I shall do everything I can to make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible.

*MAJOR SEELY: In view of the fact that the Marconi Company says it wishes to put no obstacle in the way of this being carried out, that the failure in the matter was caused by a misunderstanding, and as the first cost would only be two or three hundred pounds per light vessel, will the right hon. Gentleman reconsider his answer.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have said I will do everything I possibly can, I do not see how I can go beyond that.

Scottish Harbour Grants.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the amount which has been granted in aid of harbours in Scotland by the Committee appointed in 1899; and how much of that sum has been allocated in aid of harbours in the Highland crofting counties.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Grants amounting to £31,500 have been promised to harbours in Scotland on the recommendation of the Committee appointed in 1899. No grant has been made in aid of any harbours in the Highland crofting counties.

Avoch (Ross-shire) Channel Lights.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether arrangements have yet been made to carry out the scheme of the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners for lighting the channel off Avoch, Ross-shire.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have directed that sanction be given to the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners to enable them to incur the necessary expenditure for this work.

Naval Expenditure.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the desire of the Government for a general agreement amongst the Powers for the curtailment of naval expenditure has been communicated officially to the Governments of the Powers.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The views of the Government have been publicly expressed in this House, and it has not been thought necessary to make any formal communication to the Governments of the Powers on the subject, nor, as at present advised, do we think any object would be gained by making any such communication.

Scottish Land Laws.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the expediency of introducing land legislation for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland similar to that now under consideration for Ireland.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, there is no parallel between the two cases, and the House has before it the main lines of the legislative programme of the Government for the session.

London Education Bill.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education a Question of which I have given him private notice, viz., what will be the additional charge on the Exchequer of the London Education Bill and what additional burden will be thrown by it on the London ratepayers?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University): I am not now prepared to give an answer. I am sorry to say I misunderstood the note of the hon. Member, but I will furnish him with the information he desires at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr. LOUGH: I wanted it before the debate.

THE LATE MR. HANBURY.

Mr. SCHWANN, who had upon the Paper two Questions addressed to the President of the Board of Agriculture, withdrew them and said he hoped he might be allowed to express his deep regret, which he was sure was shared by every Member of the House, at the unexpected and most sudden bereavement which had fallen upon the House. Having regard to the great sincerity, ability, and energy with which he always discharged his official duties, he was sure the whole House had anticipated for Mr. Hanbury a successful career in statesmanship and will deeply regret his death.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, rising at the conclusion of Questions, said—I hope the House will not think I am taking a course which is at all improper if I ask to be allowed to take this opportunity to express the sympathy which, I am sure, is deeply felt on both sides of the House, and equally on both sides of the House, for the sudden, the tragic, loss of the distinguished statesman who passed away this morning. There is no parallel for such an event during the sitting of the House in my not short experience of Parliament, but yet I feel confident I am only taking the course which the House would desire me to take. Mr Hanbury was for nearly a generation a prominent and distinguished member of this Assembly. No man, I think, had a greater love for the House of Commons; no man had a minuter or more accurate knowledge of its procedure; no man, in or out of office, was more assiduous in his attendance or more anxious to take his full share of the work which devolves upon this hard-worked Assembly. Of Mr. Hanbury as Minister for Agriculture we know much; but we do not know, I think, all he would have been able to do in that office. It was quite evident to those who watched his career that he brought to it an originality of method and a desire to adapt what is, after all, a young office to the needs of the agricultural community which have won tributes of praise and regard from all those interested in agricultural pursuits in every part of Great Britain. By his loss, not only do all the many friends which he possessed on both sides of the House and among all sections of politics greatly suffer, but the House itself loses one of its oldest and one of its most distinguished Members, and the country at large is deprived of the services of a man whom we had every reason to believe for many years to come would be able to devote his great administrative capabilities to the benefit of the country. That sadness greatly adds to the sympathy which everybody will feel for those whom he has left behind. Everybody must feel how dark is the shadow cast over our proceedings by the sudden disappearance from among us of one who not a week ago was taking an active part in Cabinet and Parliamentary work.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I am sure all Members of the House would wish to associate themselves with the expressions to which the Prime Minister has just given utterance. I have, indeed, nothing to add to his plain and feeling statement. Mr. Hanbury has been long a conspicuous and distinguished member of the House; he was devoted to the House of Commons, and to his work in it; he was strenuous, industrious, vigorous, frank, friendly, accessible. I do not know that any better qualities could be attributed to any member of the House of Commons. He has been taken from us—cut down in the flower of his age. There remains to us nothing but a friendly and regretful memory of him, and I think, while expressing that regret, we can only add a word of sincere sympathy with the sorrowing wife he has left behind him.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I hope the House will allow me to add one word in order to emphasise, if it is necessary to do so, the absolute unanimity of feeling on this subject in all parts of the House. There is no portion of the House where the sentiments expressed by the First Lord of the Treasury are more universally felt than here among my colleagues on these benches. In the past it has been my fortune on more than one occasion to hold communications with the late Mr. Hanbury on Irish affairs, and I always found him a man of courageous and independent judgment, and, in addition to that, a man full of sympathy with the wants and needs of Ireland.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): As a member of this House who for a great number of years has been more or less connected with agriculture I hope it will not be regarded as presumption on my part if I ask leave to say how entirely I desire to associate myself with every word that has fallen from the Leader of the House. When Mr. Hanbury was appointed Minister for Agriculture it may be remembered that some criticisms were made on the appointment of a man who was not supposed to be directly connected with that interest. He lived to falsify every one of those apprehensions. His zeal, his energy, his activity in the interest of that great industry, which constituted almost a new departure, have never been equalled. He won the esteem and commanded the confidence of the whole agricultural interest. His work will not easily be forgotten, and his loss will be deeply deplored by the agricultural world, and by none more than by myself.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston): Having sat for eighteen years as the colleague of the late Mr. Hanbury in the representation of Preston, I hope I may be allowed to add an expression of my deep sorrow for the loss we have sustained—a loss in which I have a personal share. I only wish to lay a little emphasis on his great devotion to the duties of the office he held. Only on Monday week he and I were present at a great meeting of our constituents, and although to address a mass of people is not a light thing, so desirous was he not to miss any opportunity of promoting the interests of his Department that he went to Preston specially for that purpose, and against my desire travelled back by the night mail. I assure the House that I can speak in the name of the constituency for which he sat when I say that one and all of its members, to whatever party they belong, feel his loss very deeply.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 127.]

Bill to be considered upon Thursday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.]

Minutes of the proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 128.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

SELECTION STANDING COMMITTEES.

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen members in respect of the Pistols Bill:— Major Kenneth Balfour, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Lord Alwyne Compton, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Duke, Mr. Helme, Mr. Batty Langley, Mr. Lowe, Sir William Rattigan, Mr. Renwick, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, and Mr. Tomkinson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I rise to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, and in doing so may I say that I am acting, I believe, on behalf of the whole Opposition. I am quite sure that I have in this matter the entire and absolute sympathy of my London colleagues; and as showing some justification for the position I am occupying, may I say that some years ago, in the dim and distant past, I had the honour for six years of being a member of the London School Board. I may therefore claim as much knowledge of the problem we have to solve as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University has gained in his experience at the Education Department. At the outset, and before dealing with the merits of the Bill, I wish to enter a protest which I believe will have the sympathy of the whole House. We have of late got into a system of Bill by reference. This Bill affects the whole of London, with its population of five or six millions, yet there is only one comprehensible clause in it; all the other clauses are examples of legislation by reference. Therefore the hon. Gentleman in charge of it will have to excuse me if in the course of my remarks I misinterpret the measure in any particular.

There is only one good word that I can say for the Bill, and that is that in regard to higher education the limited rate of 2d. is excluded from London, and the County Council and local authority will be able to spend such money as they desire in the furtherance of higher education. I am bound to say, however, I fear their power in that direction will be considerably curtailed in consequence of the addition to the rates which will be necessary for the relief which is to be given to the subscribers to voluntary schools. In discussing this Bill I think we shall have one advantage which we did not enjoy in the debates on last year's Bill. Last year the questions discussed turned chiefly on the religious question and the question of the non-provided schools, whereas now all we have chiefly to consider is the questions of the Authority and of the provided schools. That is due to the fact that the proportion of voluntary schools as compared with board schools is comparatively small in London, to the fact that in every case the parent has a choice of schools, and also to the way in which the London School Board has carried out its work, which has done much to alleviate the religious difficulty. I desire, however, to say that we strongly protest against rate aid being given to voluntary schools without complete public control, and shall continue to protest until we have the opportunity of reversing that policy. I am glad to think, however, that in London the matter is not such an acute one as it is in the case of those 8,000 parishes of which we heard so much in the debates of last year, in which Nonconformist parents were not only bound to support the voluntary schools, but are also compelled to send their children to schools with the religious atmosphere of which they disagree.

The religious question being then less acute in London than in the provinces, some of us had hoped that, in the circumstances, the Government would have dealt with the education question in London courageously and comprehensively, so as to promote national education. But we have been woefully disappointed. On the occasion of the First Reading of this Bill all of us who spoke on this side of the House condemned both its principles and details. I do not think it improves on acquaintance; the more we have looked at it the less we have liked it, and I think our criticisms on the First Reading were mild in comparison with those we shall have to direct against the measure now. The Government had an opportunity of dealing with this matter on broad general lines, and I would like to point out to the House that they could have dealt with it entirely apart from the Bill of last year, the only vital principle being the co-ordination of education under a single authority, on which we are all agreed. It cannot be pretended that any other vital principle is involved. Nor does the Bill embody the only proposal the Government had before them. It is an open secret that the Government have considered some scores of plans which they have debated, altered, or rejected until the proposals finally solidified into their present form, which is, I think, the worst of all. They cannot, therefore, at all events, plead the question of principle. Then there was no obligation on them to follow slavishly for London the policy they had laid down for the country. In regard to educational matters, London has always been treated separately from the country. I find that the largest number of children in average attendance in schools in any town in the provinces is 75,000 — at both Birmingham and Manchester. But in London the number in average attendance is 750,000, and, therefore, while it may be right to municipalise our education in cases where you are dealing with 75,000 children, it may be the height of folly to do so when you are dealing with 750,000 children. It may be quite right to give the control of 75,000 children to a municipal body in the country, but at the same time it may be the height of inexpediency to give the control of 750,000 to any municipal body existing in London. Then we are not dealing with the same municipal bodies in London as in the country. The London County Council is not a County Council except in name—it is a deal more so; the Borough Councils are not Borough Councils except in name—they are a good deal less so. My hon. friend apparently does not agree with that, but I will ask him this: If the Borough Councils in London are in exactly the same position as County Borough Councils in the country, why do not the Government propose to divide London up into twenty-nine separate places, and to give to each the control of education in its district? The hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education knows that that would be impossible, and that is, shortly, my answer to his contention that the Borough Councils in London are the same as the County Borough Councils in the country.

That being so, and the Government having, as I think, a clean slate in the matter, and having a free hand, surely it was their duty to take into consultation those primarily interested. I should have thought that when they were going to abolish a body like the London School Board and to confer these duties on the County and Borough Councils they would have taken all these into consultation. But they did nothing of the kind; and now they are trying to rush the Second Reading of the Bill, without any adequate reason, before the two great bodies concerned have had any opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. Of course I know why they are doing so. The debate on the First Reading showed that the general sense of the House was that the Bill as it stood was ridiculous, and the Government are afraid that unless they can get the Second Reading before the County Council and the School Board have an opportunity of criticising the measure, it will be so torn to shreds that they will have to withdraw it altogether. Where are they getting support for this Bill from? I presented a petition against it from thirty-five members of the School Board, including clergymen of the Church of England, Roman Catholic priests, Moderates, and others who in the ordinary way support the Government. The Parliamentary Committee of the London County Council though they have had very little time to consider the Bill, have levelled a most crushing indictment against it. Further than that, thirteen, I believe, of the Borough Councils have passed resolutions declaring that they do not desire it, and I should like to know how many of the rest have passed resolutions in favour of the Bill. Then to turn to the debate on the First Reading. The hon. Members for the Strand, for South Manchester and for one of the Divisions of Essex, all representative men, with regard to a question of this nature, spoke in the course of that debate, and absolutely condemned the principle of the Bill and the inclusion in it of the Borough Councils. Is that the kind of support which the Government are going to get from Members of this House and from Moderates outside?

What is the problem with which the Government has to deal in this question? Its magnitude I have already mentioned. There are 750,000 children in average attendance in the Metropolis. There are some thousand schools and 20,000 teachers, so that the problem is as great as if we were dealing with the education of Scotland as a whole. We are all agreed that what is required in dealing with this matter is the coordination of all grades of education, and the placing of all education in the hands of a single authority. There were then three courses open to the Government. There was, first, the adoption of the *ad hoc* principle—viz., the creation of a body directly elected for the purpose of education or for some other general purpose, like the School Board or the London County Council. The second alternative was to make the London County Council the sole and supreme authority; and the third was what is commonly called a Water Board, to create a conglomeration of heterogeneous authorities, one part directly elected, and the other part created by the process of selection and of delegation. I want to ask the hon. Gentleman why the Government passed over the *ad hoc* authority, and deliberately chose what I consider to be the worst of the three plans. I am not going to say much about the London School Board. Everybody who has watched its course will admit that, during the thirty years it has been in existence, it has done admirable work for the citizens of London. It has had one advantage. It has been an absolutely pure body. It has had another advantage, viz., the enormous influence it has exercised in London in bringing together different sections of public men, belonging to different denominations, and inducing them to work together for the good of the children of London. It has had an additional advantage in the shape of the assistance of many talented women who have helped in its work. These women, unfortunately, have now ceased to take their proper share in the work. I admit that there have been blemishes in the work of the London School Board; but surely, in the establishment of a reformed body, it would have been a very simple matter to take steps which would cause those blemishes to disappear. The hope of some of us was, that we should have had an educational Authority efficient for all purposes, rising from the ashes of the London School Board.

But the Government have wantonly put that alternative aside. The Secretary for the Board of Education, in dealing with the London School Board, argued that the electors take no interest in its proceedings. I do not entirely agree with him there. I deplore, as all of us who have anything to do with London government must deplore, the very great apathy that is shown by the ordinary London citizen. But it is not a remedy for that to abolish the only opportunity which the citizens now have of taking a direct interest in educational matters. Surely, the best way of dealing with such a state of things is to give greater powers and greater work to your educational authority, and thereby seek to create greater interest among the citizens of London in its work. Again, the hon. Gentleman said there was too much centralisation, that the administration of the School Board was over-centralised. I entirely agree with him in that. When I was a member of the Board, and, indeed, ever since, I have considered that this over-centralisation is a very great fault. But that is, after all, a comparatively small matter, which could have been easily remedied if the School Board had been taken as a basis of authority. It could have been reformed in the way I have suggested.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I did not quite catch what reforms the hon. Member suggested.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am sorry I did not make myself clear. What I meant to convey was, that if the School Board had been made a larger and more important body, that would necessarily have led to a very considerable amount of local decentralisation.

The third objection which the hon. Gentleman made to the London School Board was, that the members were over-zealous, and in connection with that he referred to the Cockerton judgment. But, in regard to that matter, may I point out that their action was encouraged and endorsed by the Education Department itself? I admit that the encouragement was given at a time when there was still a spark of educational zeal left at the Education Department, but still I should have thought that was no reason for abolishing the Board. It was, on the contrary, a reason for giving it greater and better work to do. In former days, when we promoted reforms in this House, our plan was to uproot rotten trunks and to get rid of rotten branches. But the idea of reform of the hon. Gentleman to-day seems to be to cut down young and vigorous trees, instead of digging round about the roots and pruning the branches, so that they may grow more vigorously in the future than in the past.

But the real reason why the hon. Gentleman desires to abolish the School Board is to be found in what he calls the unfortunate characteristics of direct election. [Sir WILLIAM ANSON dissented.] The hon. Gentleman said, I think, that direct election led to certain unfortunate characteristics of delegation.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I said direct election for one purpose only.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I do not wish to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman, but I desire to remind the House that this was his most formidable objection to the London School Board. He went on to say that the elections did not turn on purely educational questions, and that the voters were swayed by political, social and local reasons. He said, further, that London electors will vote for Mr. B., whom they know and appreciate, but will not vote for Mr. A., whom they do not know, although he may be the better educational expert, and, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, ought to be elected rather than Mr. B. He went on to say that it would be of no use having experts on the Board if they were to be swamped by directly elected Members. Therefore, direct election is to be abolished as far as the School Board is concerned. This is the most astonishing doctrine of representative government which I have ever heard advanced in the House of Commons, and it was cheered by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Conservative Party was once called an "organised hypocrisy," and, really, if this is the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to local representative bodies, it is curious that they should have created the London County Council, which is an *ad hoc* authority directly elected for municipal purposes, and Borough Councils, which are also *ad hoc* authorities directly elected. If hon. Gentlemen are going to be logical they must abolish these bodies, as well as the School Board. But I want to know from the Secretary to the Board of Education how he will be better off in this respect when he has abolished the London School Board, and handed its powers over to the County and Borough Councils. He has laid it down that the local educational authority should be an authority popularly elected, and directly responsible to the ratepayers. In his speech the other day, he said there would be elections for the County and Borough Councils in which educationists can take an interest. I want to ask him this. He says when they are voting direct for an educational body the voters are swayed by local, political and social questions. When next November and next March the elections referred to by the hon. Gentleman take place, are the electors going to be simply influenced by educational matters, or are they not likely to be swayed by political, social and local reasons as well as, I trust, by municipal reasons? I think under those circumstances the hon. Gentleman's favourite, Mr. A., will have a good deal less chance of securing election to one of these bodies than if he were standing for a purely educational authority.

No, Sir, the only logical outcome of the hon. Gentleman's position is this. That he himself and the Education Department should select every representative on the education authority; and a more eminently unfit body to carry on a democratic work like education than that would be, I cannot possibly conceive. I want to put one further question to the hon. Gentleman in regard to this question of election, and that is, how far the electors will have an opportunity of expressing their opinions in regard to educational matters? I venture to say that some of us will be placed in a difficult position at future elections. This position may arise and will arise. I will take two candidates for my purpose—Mr. C., and Mr. D. Mr. C. is a good man at municipal work, but he knows as little about educational matters as the late President of the Board of Education—he may not even know what a pupil teacher is. Mr. D. has great knowledge of educational matters, but is very hazy in the matter of drains. Now, I want both good education and good drains, but if I vote for Mr. C. I get good drains and bad education, while if I vote for Mr. D. I shall get good education and shall probably die from typhoid fever. That is the sort of quandary in which many of us will be placed. It is no exaggeration at all, and I venture to say that the more elections turn on municipal matters the worse it will be for education, while the more they turn on educational matters the worse it will be for municipal work. There is another point I must put to the hon. Gentleman, and I can assure him that all these are practical and not mere debating points. He says that these bodies are to be popularly elected and directly responsible to the ratepayers. It is of no use their being directly responsible, unless the ratepayers have an opportunity, not only of expressing their views, but of giving effect to them by, if necessary, changing the *personnel* of the bodies. What I want to know is this. He says that the electors, under his proposal, are to have practical means of bringing home to the bodies which they elect the particular educational views and policy which they desire to see pursued. But how are you going to secure that in the body he proposes to create? It is divided into three sections, one elected by one set of ratepayers to the London County Council, another elected by another set of ratepayers to the Borough Councils, and a third not elected by any ratepayers at all. How are the ratepayers as a whole going to express their views in regard to grave educational matters which may have to be dealt with by this body? There are 118 elected members of the London County Council. At the outside only thirty-five of these can, by any possibility, have any direct power over educational matters. In the case of the Borough Councils it will be only one member out of forty or fifty who will have a direct voice in educational matters. We are thus brought to this position. Unless the election of the whole 118 members of the London County Council is to turn on educational matters the ratepayers will have no control over these questions. And, speaking as a ratepayer, I assert that the chances are forty to one against a particular ratepayer even having an opportunity of giving a vote which will influence the Borough Councils in educational matters, while it will be a four to one chance in the case of the London County Council. It is, therefore, a farce for the hon. Gentleman to say that there will be complete electoral control over the election. This all comes from the abolition of direct election in the body which is to govern London education.

But supposing an *ad hoc* authority be out of the question, what is the alternative the Government suggests to put in its place? The hon. Gentleman has submitted a Board which he suggests will be better constituted and better fitted to perform the work there is for it to do. What is this better designed Board? It is a sort of hotch-potch of authorities, including representatives of the London County Council, the Borough Councils, the Board of Education, the experts and the managers. Do we get the co-ordination which we all desire in this matter? As far as I can understand the Bill, higher education will be carried out on a different system to elementary. You will have different sets of managers, there will be one set for the elementary schools, and another set for the evening schools; and I also understand that the provided schools will be dealt with in a different way to the non-provided schools. Is that co-ordination? Shall we in that way get the one authority which we all desire? No, on the contrary, we shall have five authorities. Shall we get that complete control by a central authority responsible to the ratepayers which we all desire? No, we shall not, because the central authority is put in a statutory minority on the body which it is supposed to control. There is no such thing as co-ordination under one authority, neither is there complete control in the scheme of the hon. Gentleman.

In his speech on the First Reading the hon. Gentleman said that this was not a Water Board. No, Sir, it is not. It is much worse than a Water Board. In his scheme the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board gave the sole control of all its duties and revenues to one body, and did not pitchfork a lot of experts on to that body, neither did he give the Borough Councils double authority on the Water Board. Last Autumn we in London were groaning under the yoke of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. But I am bound to say that if he chastised us with whips the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education is now chastising us with scorpions, and if I had to choose between the Jeroboam of the Local Government Board and the Rehoboam of the Board of Education, I should prefer the Jeroboam of the Water Board to the Rehoboam of the Education Authority.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): If the hon. Gentleman will refer to his authority he will find that the comparison is not between Jeroboam and Rehoboam, but between Solomon and Rehoboam.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My recollection is nothing of the sort. However, I do not wish to unduly prolong my speech by introducing this new religious element into the debate. If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to the text he will see that the comparison was as between the old man and the young man. The one recommended a more severe punishment than the other. However, I do not mind, I am quite willing to accept the right hon. Gentleman's description of the President of the Local Government Board as Solomon, but I say I should prefer to be chastised with his whip rather than with the scorpions of the Board of Education.

If we are not to have an *ad hoc* authority then we must have a very different authority to that proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. If education in London is to be municipalised, it must surely be done in the way it has been accomplished in the counties, viz., by giving complete and full control to the County Council. The hon. Gentleman will say that I am forcing an open door. For what did he say in regard to this matter on the First Reading? He said he was putting the London County Council on the same footing as the other County Councils, who had been made the educational authority with full control, and with a clear majority on the Board. I think he must have forgotten what was in the Act of last year, which he was so instrumental in passing. As regards the position of County Councils, they were to have at least a majority of their own members on the Education Committees; they need only appoint outsiders, if they thought it desirable, and, in so far as they appointed outsiders, they were to have complete power as regards nomination and appointment. Further, they were to nominate no less than four out of the six local managers for the provident schools; and they were to have complete control over the appointment and dismissal of teachers. Contrast that with the Bill now before the House. The London County Council were not to have a majority on the education authority. At the very best, they would be in a minority of thirty-six to ninety-seven. In the selection and election of thirty-one other members they would have no voice at all; and in the selection and election of the remaining thirty members their powers would be greatly circumscribed. They would have to delegate enormous powers to this large committee which they would have no means of resuming. They could not control it.

The statutory managers would be totally independent of them, and would have in their hands the appointment of the teachers, the selection of the sites, and the custody of the buildings, and an appeal from the education authority to the Education Department. It seems to me that it is idle to say that that would be putting the London County Council in the same position as other County Councils. I do not think that this scheme can possibly work; and it seems to me monstrous that the largest municipal body in the whole kingdom should be treated in a way in which none of the smaller County Councils have been treated by the Government. The London County Council are to be hampered and checked at every turn. They will be prevented from having full control over matters which affect them; and the electors are to be prevented from having a voice in regard to education. It seems to me that if we are not to have an *ad hoc* authority the County Council must be absolute masters in their own house. They must have a majority on the committee, and they must have the nomination of other members; the committee must not contain any statutory persons at all. The Council must be allowed to have the full power of appointing managers, and they must retain the appointment and dismissal of teachers. This is the only way in which you can hope to have a harmonious dealing with this question, and the only way in which we can have educational progress under the London County Council.

There is one question in connection with the Council on which I wish to say a word. Assuming that the County Council is adopted as the education authority in place of the School Board, can they undertake the work? As far as we can see their work, they are ready and willing to undertake anything that may be legitimately put upon them. Surely, it is not we who have argued that the County Council are incapable of undertaking further work; but it is surprising to find right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have refused to put on the shoulder of the County Council municipal duties such as water and docks, putting on them matters which are in no way municipal. I look with some doubt to putting this extra enormous burden on the County Council, for I am afraid it may relax, to a certain extent, their efforts elsewhere. But I say emphatically that if we are not to have an *ad hoc* authority, the work must be given, not only to the County Council, but to the County Council pure and simple. The County Council must be the sole and supreme authority. I apologise to the House for detaining it so long, and I only wish to say a few words with regard to another matter, to which I have not yet specifically referred. I mean the double representation of the Borough Councils, first on the Education Committee, and secondly as the statutory managers in their own districts. I do not think I need trouble the House by saying much as to the position of the Borough Councils on the Education Committee. I think it is common knowledge that that part of the Bill has already gone; and that before the Bill is through Committee we shall see the County Council given a majority on the Statutory Committee. That can only be done by leaving out the Borough Councils. I saw that London Conservative Members passed a Resolution yesterday in which they proposed to give the County Council a majority on the Statutory Committee, without eliminating the representatives of the Borough Councils. Of course, that was in order to meet the two views held on the other side of the House; but I think any one who looks into the matter will find that that is quite impossible. Already the number proposed by the Government is too unwieldy. It is as unwieldy as the Water Board, which already is almost breaking down through sheer weight of numbers. The only way in which the proposal of hon. Gentlemen opposite can be carried out is by adding to the Committee some ten or twenty more members from the County Council, which would not only make the Committee unwieldy, but would not leave a sufficient number of members on the County Council for other work. While that part of the Bill will go, I am afraid that the other double representation of the Borough Councils will still remain. They are to be put in the position of statutory managers, without any power being given to the County Council to revise or control their proceedings, and they are to be given the enormous influence and power of selecting and dismissing teachers, which, in my opinion, will make them quite independent of the education authority in the general direction and management of the schools. I think this is a very serious blot on the Bill. I cannot conceive anything worse for education in London than that the question of the appointment and dismissal of teachers should be in the hands of the local authorities rather than in the hands of the central authority. We want, in this respect, a uniform standard of excellence and a wide field of selection, and we want the selection to be in the hands of the central body, who will insist that the best teachers shall be sent to certain schools, and who will let teachers rise by merits, take the rough with the smooth. That is the only way, in my opinion, to prevent jobbery and undue pressure being brought to bear on the appointments. When the Bill is in Committee we will, no doubt, have some Amendments to suggest; but, in my opinion, whatever Amendments are adopted will not make the Bill of any use educationally to London. Whether as regards an *ad hoc* authority, or the London County Council as the sole education authority, I do not believe that this Bill is capable of carrying out either contention; and therefore I shall oppose it, even if the Government endeavours to amend it. It is grotesque to start with; and will lead to endless confusion between different authorities. It is a retrogressive Bill, and is a great blow to municipal democratic government in London. It is depriving the citizens, as is the policy of the President of the Local Government Board, of all control over their own affairs, with the result that they will have no voice no control, no interest in their affairs. I cannot conceive anything more disastrous to the good government of London, or to the citizenship of the inhabitants of London. I believe this Bill will be a fatal blow to educational progress and to municipal progress also. On those grounds I certainly have great pleasure in moving its rejection at the present moment, and shall oppose it at every subsequent stage.

*DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I desire to second the Motion; and I desire to say, first of all, that I am surprised that the Prime Minister should have rushed the Second Reading of this Bill without giving the School Board or the County Council any opportunity of discussing it. Both bodies had risen for the Easter recess before the Bill was issued, and have not yet met; and we are now engaged on the Second Reading of this Bill before they have had an opportunity of discussing it. That is not what we ought to expect in the way of consideration and courtesy from the Prime Minister. There are a number of very controversial educational questions involved in this Bill, but I do not intend to refer to them now. I propose only to deal with a fundamental and acute issue, namely, the question of the constitution of the local education authority in London. I want to confine myself absolutely and entirely to that particular question. What is the policy of the Government with regard to the local control of education. I think I shall put it fairly when I say that the Government policy is to hand over the local control of education to Municipal Councils. When the First Lord of the Treasury enunciated that policy last year I said that there was nothing necessarily anti-democratic in it. Take the case of a town of 10,000 inhabitants. There, you could very easily make the Town Council the education authority, and you need have no second authority in that case; but when we come to the great urban areas, the great county boroughs, there you are confronted with an education problem so minute and detailed, but so vast in its bulk, that you cannot safely municipalise the control of education. If you do, you will find that you are compelled to call in a very large number of outsiders, who are not responsible to the ratepayers, to carry on the work; and I am bound to say that while I pleaded last year, again and again, for the continuation of the great urban School Boards in a perfected form, capable of controlling higher education, I feel that we shall be confronted at a very early date with appeals from these great urban centres, asking us, not in any partisan spirit, but from the point of view of pure educationists, to do one or two things—either to revive the *ad hoc* principle or to secure an enlarged membership for City Councils, in order that the work shall remain in the hands of the representatives of the ratepayers.

When I come to the case of London the physical impossibility of municipalisation seems to me to be overwhelming. To put the problem of London education in a sentence, in the work of the School Board, the voluntary schools, and of higher education, there is involved the supervision of 2,000 separate educational institutions, the control of 20,000 public servants, the education of 1,000,000 pupils and students, and the expenditure of £4,000,000 of public money. The hon. Member for Poplar said that that was a piece of work as big as the education of all Scotland. That is correct, and he might have gone on to say that the education of Scotland has called for the creation of 972 School Boards and thirty-nine Secondary Education Committees. He might also have said that it is a piece of work three times as great as the education of Wales, which up to the present has called for the creation of 350 School Boards, twelve County Education Committees, three County Borough Committees, and the great Welsh Central Education Board. But I will not rest my case upon a comparison with Scotch or Welsh education. After examining it with the most painstaking care, I say that the education of London represents a piece of work far more minute in its details and just as large in bulk as the whole of the work of the London County Council. That is the comparison upon which I rest my case. Take the School Board work alone—excluding altogether the work of voluntary schools and higher education. Here is the diary issued to members of the School Board for the present week: Monday, 10.30 a.m. special Sub-committee of the School Management Committee on special subjects of instruction; noon, Teaching Staff Sub-committee of the School Management Committee. At that one meeting there were 141 teachers to be seen, considered for promotion, or in extreme cases, for criticism in consequence of default of duty. Also at noon, Sub-committee of Pupil Teachers' Committee on preliminary selection of assistants for Stockwell and Marylebone pupil teachers' centres; at one o'clock, Sub-committee of Works Committee on Contracts; at two o'clock, they met for ordinary business; also at two o'clock, special Sub-committee of General Purposes Committee on solicitors' charges in litigation cases; at 2.30, General Purposes Committee; at 3 o'clock Sites and Finance Sub-committee of Works Committee; also at 3 o'clock, the Evening Continuation Schools Committee (at the meeting of which there are frequently a hundred teachers to be considered, appointed or transferred). That was yesterday. What is the diary of to-day? At 10.30, Sub-committee of the Finance Committee on Accounts; 10.30, Finance Rota; 11 o'clock, Finance Committee; 2 o'clock, Sub-committee of Works Committee on repairs.

AN HON. MEMBER: How many members do these Committees and Sub-committees comprise?

*DR. MACNAMARA: There would be seven or eight members on the Sub-committee on Accounts, from fifteen to twenty on the Finance Committee, and four on the Finance Rota.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): Will they attend?

*DR. MACNAMARA: Are they going to attend under this Bill? Under an *ad hoc* scheme those who elect can ask members why they do not attend. Under this scheme, out of ninety-seven persons you can tackle only thirty-six—the County Councillors. To go on with the diary. It will be the same thing to-morrow. On Thursday the Board will meet for four or five hours public session; on Friday there is a meeting of a big and onerous Committee—the School Management Committee; and I take it that Saturday and Sunday will be spent in reading up the agendas for next week. But Members will say, "Oh, you can devolve a lot of this work." When I went to the School Board I was as keenly for devolution as the hon. Member for Poplar. There are some matters you could devolve, but they are not very substantial, and you could not devolve even those with safety. There is scarcely anything that could be devolved, and those who say that devolution is the remedy do not mean good administration. If hon. Members would like to know what the School Board members were engaged upon yesterday, I have here the agendas, twelve in number, and very voluminous, for Monday alone. What is the Government scheme for dealing with all this stupendous work? On the First Reading of the Bill the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education said—

> "The Government lay down the principle that education should be linked with municipal government, and the object of this Bill is to place the London County Council to a great extent in the position in which the County Councils are placed by the Act of 1902. The cardinal principle of the Bill is to make education a part of our municipal institutions. The London County Council will be the local education authority for London."

That is nominally the scheme. The Council will work through a Committee of whom thirty-six are members of the County Council, thirty-one members of the Borough Councils, with thirty others added. That is the present arrangement, but there is no finality in that proposal. I believe that this scheme will be modified out of recognition, but I may say at once that it will not satisfy me even then; I want something totally different. Look at the constitution of the Committee. The thirty-six County Councillors will be there by direct election. They will be substantially elected *ad hoc* though not exclusively for educational purposes. Thirty-one persons will be there by secondary election, chosen from the Borough Councils. Not one of those sixty-seven Members can be a woman. As a colleague of nine women members of the School Board I can speak of the admirable work and devoted service they have given to the public. I do not know whether the Government intend by reference to effect a complete revolution of the Local Government Act, 1888, and the London Government Act, 1899; otherwise, as I have said, not one of these members can be a woman. Of the remaining thirty members, of whom some may be women, not one will be elected on behalf of the ratepayers either directly or secondarily; they will be selected by the County Council. I have only one comment to make on that scheme. We need not bother about it; it was killed at its birth. I have no doubt that at a very early stage in the debate the Government will tell us that these proportions are to be altered. When the Local Government Act, 1888, was before the House, the Prime Minister said—

> "Certain representations have been made to the Government to create the London County Council by secondary election from the existing vestries and district boards of works."

That is, exactly as it is now proposed to constitute the education authority for London. The Prime Minister dismissed the suggestion with a wave of the hand, and said—

> "Apart from the point of view which I shall come to directly, it would be a revival to a certain extent of the principle adopted, tried, and finally rejected in the case of the Metropolitan Board of Works. It would introduce into the London County Council the element of secondary election, and although I think there are many cases in which secondary election works extremely well, still it has not a very good record behind it in the case of the Metropolitan Board of Works."

I apply that comment of the Prime Minister to the scheme before us. But it is an abortion, and we need not discuss it further. The situation we have to face is quite a different one. I propose to face what I understand to be the critical situation at the present moment. Practically all sides are saying, "You stated that the County Council was to be the authority." The words are—

> "The London County Council will be the local education authority for London."

If you mean that, make the London County Council genuinely the authority. Take out the Borough Council representation and let the County Council have a clear majority. When we go into the Committee stage I understand that something of this sort is going to happen. The borough councillors must come right out, or, if they remain in, then County Council representation must be so increased as to give the county councillors a distinct majority on the Central Committee. I want to examine the situation which would be then created. Take the first alternative. Take the Borough Councils out and that would leave thirty-six county councillors and thirty outside persons. Does anybody suppose that in that event the thirty-six county councillors would be able to attend to this work? The mere taking out of the borough councillors and leaving in the thirty-six county councillors would, in my opinion, make the Bill worse, for the work would not be so likely to be carried on by representatives of the ratepayers. With the borough councillors you have sixty-seven out of ninety-seven elected persons. But take away the thirty-one and then you have only thirty-six elected persons. A Bill upon those lines would make matters worse than they are now, and I should oppose it. That is not the proposal of the London Unionist Members, who wish to leave the Borough Councils in, and to so enlarge the County Council representation as to secure that they have a distinct majority over the thirty-one borough councillors and outsiders. I do ask hon. Members to consider whether the County Council can spare the men for that work, whether they would be able to do it, and whether it is not a fact that the work would not fall into the hands of the co-opted persons and officials. When I hear hon. Gentlemen making this proposal, I cannot help remembering that, year after year, we had it from right hon. Gentlemen on the Government Benches that the County Council already had too much to do. I remember Lord Salisbury went to the Albert Hall in November, 1897, and charged the County Council with being smitten with megalomania, and he said—

> "You will see, if you watch the proceedings of the London County Council, that they are overborne by the labour which they have to go through."

The creation of the Borough Councils has not allowed any devolution of County Council work, for they have had more to do. The Duke of Devonshire in 1898 said—

> "The London County Council has quite sufficient business, and quite sufficient important business, to occupy its whole and undivided attention."

The Colonial Secretary said in February, 1895, at Stepney, that the London County Councillors had too much to do. He said—

> "It is not their fault, because the task which they have undertaken is an absolutely impossible task. If they were archangels from heaven they could not do the work cast upon them."

Those things are more true to-day than they were then. The London County Council last year had to keep sixty-eight committees and sub-committees going, and it called 1,313 meetings. If you are going to double the work, it will be holding 2,626 meetings, and 136 committees and sub-committees, and how can it do that with its present membership? Since these statements were made, what has been done? Fourteen members have been detached for the Water Board, eight have been elected for the Port of London, six for the Thames Conservancy Committee, two for the Lea Conservancy, and now you are proposing to take thirty-six for the Board of Education, in a way which will take them away from all County Council work. You are proposing to take more than half the elected members of the County Council for other purposes, and I cannot help thinking that in this determination to destroy the School Board for London, there is a general endeavour on the part of someone or other to wreck the County Council. If the education work is to be done properly, you are bound to wreck the County Council. I know that some hon. Members opposite do not want to do that, and it is to them that I appeal. This Bill cannot be amended on the lines I have suggested except on one condition, and that is that you must be prepared to face the issue and increase the membership of the London County Council, so that you will then have enough members to carry on this work. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] I hope hon. Members opposite who cheer will press that point upon the Government, who do not love the London County Council. Here is an example of the impossibility of the County Council taking over this work. At the present time the London County Council controls a very small fringe of the educational area. It has got a Technical Education Board which has not got one-fiftieth part to do of what is involved in this Bill. Look at the constitution of the Technical Education Board. The Government scheme will make this a sort of glorified Technical Education Board. On this Board at present there are twenty county councillors and fifteen outsiders. Take the Higher Education Committee of that Board. It consists of five county councillors and seven outsiders. Is that municipalisation? Is that giving the work to the representatives of the ratepayers? Take the Scholarship Committee, which consists of five county councillors and nine outsiders. Then there is the Science and Art Committee, consisting of seven county councillors and eight outsiders; and lastly, there is the Secondary Schools Committee, with five county councillors and eleven outsiders. That may be a good scheme but it is not municipalisation. If you are going to put on a Committee a majority of people who are not directly responsible to the ratepayers it is not municipalisation. If a Technical Education Committee dealing only with a small corner of the whole area gets more co opted than elected persons, then I say that is a spurious and impossible form of municipalisation which we cannot accept on this side of the House. I consider this scheme is radically bad, and you cannot amend it along the lines suggested. In the words of Mrs. Poyser—

> "You have got to hatch this over again and you have got to hatch it different."

I have only one other point, and it is in regard to what I have to propose as an alternative. So far as London is concerned there are only two alternatives which I would commend to the Prime Minister. They constitute in some form a modification of the *ad hoc* principle. My belief is that we shall come eventually to some modification of that principle. The Government may say, "We destroyed the *ad hoc* principle for the provinces, and it would look like an abandonment of that policy to retain it in London." The Government scarcely need be so squeamish about that. I believe that the case of London is so unique that you could very well, without loss of dignity, apply a different principle to the rest of the country, and you could very well agree that there is nothing for London but the *ad hoc* principle. What is the ostensible reason given for shutting the door upon the *ad hoc* principle? Upon the introduction of this Bill the Secretary to the Board of Education said—

> "At the last London School Board election only 18 per cent. of the electors went to the poll (Ministerial cheers)."

I do not know what the cheers were for. To me the matter is one to be deplored. The hon. Member went on to say—

> "The figures of the School Board elections go a long way to condemn a directly elected authority for London; therefore I do not propose to recommend a directly elected authority, and, in consequence, the object of this Bill will be to abolish the School Board for London."

The figures given by the hon. Member are eloquent of the unconcern and apathy of the Londoner at the School Board election, and I am not here to defend them. If the electors of London had been less apathetic this Bill would have been impossible. Three weeks ago to-day we were told frankly and openly in this House by a Minister of the Crown that—

> "The object of this Bill will be to abolish the School Board for London."

For thirty-two years men and women have gone down to the School Board offices on the Embankment and have silently and obscurely toiled day by day, with no public approbation, but quite the reverse in many cases, as I know to my cost. They have worked there for no personal advancement, but in order that London's citizens of to-morrow may be the better stewards of the national heritage to which they are the heirs. Three weeks ago Londoners were told that this beneficent institution was to be destroyed. Lord Lawrence, Sir Charles Reed, Dr. Angus, Canon Cromwell, Dr. Gladstone, Professor Huxley, Samuel Morley, Dr. Rigg, W. H. Smith, Archdeacon Sinclair, Bishop Thorold, Sir Richard Temple, and Miss Devonport Hill—these have carried forward the great work in order that the condition of the London child may be benefited. Every other citizen whom you meet in London to-day is an old London School Board pupil. We are to-day asked to pass the Second Reading of the Bill which is to destroy the School Board. That fact, and not the figures of the last election, is to me the most bitter testimony of the unconcern of the London people. I believe they will wake up in this matter, and when they rub their eyes I believe they will get out of bed and make it hot for some of the proposers of this scheme if it is persisted in in any form. That statement about the 18 per cent. was a most misleading one to make. I do not believe that the Secretary to the Board of Education made it intentionally for the purpose of misleading, but what are the facts? First of all, it was the lowest poll since 1894.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I have a distinct recollection of my speech. I have a strong impression that I stated that the average poll was 26 per cent.

*DR. MACNAMARA: I confess that I have overlooked that point, but 26 per cent. would not be very much more correct than 18 per cent. I will explain what I mean. At the poll the hon. Member refers to 832,071 went to the poll. In 1894 1,597,330 people went to the poll—that is twice as many people on a smaller register. It is 40 per cent. of the people. With regard to the 18 per cent. I agree that it is deplorable, but there are one or two good reasons for it which I would put forward. Why was the poll so small in 1900? Well, in October we had a General Election, and the people were inflamed with certain issues which left education in an obscuration, and people took no interest in it. On the 1st of November we had the first elections for the new Borough Councils, and 45 per cent. went to the poll. On the 29th of November we had the School Board election. There were, therefore, three elections in the course of two months, and the Londoner was a little bit tired of them. But the 18 per cent. was still more misleading Does the Parliamentary Secretary know that the rate book is the register in this case and that the areas are very large? I know people who are on the rate book over and over again for one School Board division, but they can only vote once in that division. A man of my own acquaintance is on the rate book six times; he goes to the poll once and he is held up as regards five-sixths of him as five apathetic persons. I am quite sure that the hon. Gentleman did not quite know the facts about the 18 per. cent. There is one other reason why the poll was so small, and that is because the areas are cumbrous. My own division—West Lambeth—has an area of 24 square miles, it contains 660,000 people, and it is represented by six members. How can you expect electors, however intelligent, to take an active interest in an election in an area of that sort? Of course the unconcern of the people is a very important matter. Let me explain what I think the Government ought to have done. I hope it may still do it. There are two alterations and two only. The Government might have said "These School Board areas are too large, we will simplify them to the Parliamentary areas, and we will elect one *ad hoc* member for education—man or woman for each Parliamentary area. If you complain of too many elections on different franchises we will have the elections on the same day as the County Council, and on the same voting paper if you like. If you say that by electing one person only for each area you destroy the cumulative vote in which the denominationalists have an interest, very good, we will allow the people to elect an *ad hoc* authority and give it the statutory right of co-optation." That is one scheme. The other is equally simple and equally practicable, and is going to come to pass one of these days. You believe in municipalisation. I do not quarrel with you for that, if it is physically possible. Instead of electing two county councillors, elect three for each of the fifty-nine areas, and then let the County Council tell off fifty-nine of its members as an education committee to go on with the work of education. The scheme would secure that the work should be done by the representatives of the ratepayers, and that it would not fall into hands, as in this case, of outsiders and paid officials. I hope the Government will accept either of these schemes. I have no particular choice, but I would point out that in regard to the latter you would have to repeal certain provisions of the Local Government Act of 1888, otherwise women would not be eligible for a seat. I say deliberately that London, wherever it has declared itself, is in favour of one or other of these schemes. Take the Borough Councils. You are offering them aggrandisement and new powers. What is their answer? Battersea, Camberwell, Finsbury, Fulham, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, Southwark, Wandsworth, Woolwich, Bethnal Green, and Shoreditch all declared in favour of some form of *ad hoc* and popularly elected authority for London. These boroughs represent more than half of the population of London. Hackney and Paddington have resolutions of a similar character under discussion. Bermondsey, the solitary ewe lamb of the Government, is not in favour of an *ad hoc* authority. But there is not one in favour of the Bill as it stands. The County Council to-day is passing a resolution which amounts to a preference for an *ad hoc* body.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): May I ask the hon. Member what are the words in the County Council resolution on which he relies for his statement that their first preference is for an *ad hoc* body.

*Dr. MACNAMARA: They refer to "the creation of a body directly elected." They themselves are already in existence and do not require to be elected. Then the School Board for London has, by a vote of two to one, passed a resolution in favour of my scheme. Here is a significant fact. On Thursday when the Board meets, Mr. Sharp, the late leader of the Moderate Party on the Board, a life-long Churchman and Conservative, will move a resolution declaring—

> "That the London Education Bill fails to provide for the efficient administration and advancement of education in London, and, in the opinion of the School Board for London, no Amendment of the Bill can make it a satisfactory measure."

That is a perfectly deliberate statement. At a special meeting of the County Council to-day the following resolution will be proposed—

> "That, having considered the provisions of the London Education Bill, this Council expresses its deep regret that the Bill fails to provide either for the efficient management of education or for popular control, and will introduce confusion and conflict into the local government of London.

The Council is strongly opposed to the scheme proposed by the Bill, and would prefer either the maintenance of the present system—that is the School Board, which is an *ad hoc* body—or the creation of one directly elected as the education authority, which should have complete control over all grades of education.

Mr. PEEL (Manchester, S.): There is an Amendment.

*Dr. MACNAMARA: Mr. Beechcroft has given notice of an Amendment in favour of the Bill. I do not know whether the hon. Member is a betting man, but I would like to know his opinion as to whether the Amendment will be carried. I am sorry to have kept the House so long. I speak feelingly on this matter. I have been immersed in this education business in London for the last ten years, and I cannot see this great institution go down without a protest against it for all I am worth. I appeal to hon. Members opposite because many of them have told me—and I believe what they say—that all that they want is a good educational authority. I take them at their word, and I ask them to accept either of the two alternatives I have submitted to the House. Either an *ad hoc* authority or genuine municipalisation; but as the second alternative shuts out women who have done so much good work for education, I prefer the *ad hoc* principle. I am as deeply and profoundly convinced as ever I was of anything in my life, that if you want to have wise administration and sound economy in finance, it is only by the *ad hoc* principle that you could get this in London. I beg to second the Motion.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J Balfour, Manchester, E.): I confess I am rather surprised at the degree of opposition which the hon. Gentleman and his friends have declared to this measure. For, after all, this measure is a measure of machinery. The Bill is intended, and solely intended, to apply the principles of the Bill already on the Statute-book to the metropolitan area; and I should have thought that, being a purely machinery Bill, it would have had the good fortune to have excited some milder feeling of opposition than that offered to the measure which was so hardly fought over for many months last year. I cannot quite understand the feeling of the hon. Gentleman. It perhaps arises from an idea—an entirely mistaken idea—that the framers of this Bill have some special animus against the great body of which he is a distinguished member, the London School Board.

*Dr. MACNAMARA: I did not say that.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No; but I thought that the manner in which the hon. Gentleman quoted a phrase of the

Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education on the First Reading of the Bill, and his own impassioned defence of the work of the London School Board, that he rather imagined that this Bill was intended as a slap in the face to the School Board——

DR. MACNAMARA: It is going to kill it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As an indication that the Board had not done its work. Now if that is the case, is not a slap in the face better than total destruction, which the Bill undoubtedly contemplates? I can assure the hon. Member that no such insult is intended to the body of which he is a member. Everybody recognises not only the self-devotion and ardour with which the School Board has attended to its duties, but recognises the fact that very great work has been done for London by the London School Board. The question is not really now whether the London School Board has or has not been an efficient body for the administration of education in London, but how best we are to administer education as the problem now presents itself in London, after the Act of last year, and how we are to adapt it to the special needs of the metropolitan area. Now, it is admitted on all hands that London is exceptional in this country and amongst all countries. There is no area in the civilised world where the same difficulties present themselves to the legislature as present themselves whenever we attempt to deal with an area like London. In point of population it is larger than many important European states, but London has yet to be managed on principles, which, in their general scope, are not essentially different from the municipal principles which govern other municipal areas throughout the country. How does this peculiarity of London affect the way in which we can contrive the machinery either for education or anything else? If we could cut up London into separate rating areas for education, I think a great deal could be said for the plan of dividing London educationally. There are difficulties and obvious objections to that, but I do not see how they are much greater than those which apply to dividing Manchester and Salford, which contrive to manage their education very excellently. Indeed anyone would have difficulty in knowing when he crosses the boundary between Manchester and Salford. That is a principle well worth consideration, but for one circumstance, familiar to all who have endeavoured to deal with this problem. But what is that circumstance of London? You must have one education rate for London, and since you cannot divide the rate it is absolutely necessary and inevitable that you must have a single authority to deal with that rate. Therefore, it is clear that we cannot well do that which we would otherwise do—treat these great London boroughs as they deserve to be treated from their population and wealth, as self-sufficing, and autonomous units within the metropolitan area. But it is impossible to do it for the reasons I have described, and the cogency of which has been admitted by the House. Therefore, you cannot deal with London as you can deal with Scotland and Switzerland. You must have one central authority to deal with the whole situation. Can that authority deal not merely with the broad problems presented by the education of a population of 5,000,000 persons or of 1,000,000 children? Can it also deal with the details of the education of 1,000,000 children? I say that it cannot. You must give it the assistance of some kind of delegation, and if I wanted to prove that conclusively I must point to the speech of the hon. Member. He represents an *ad hoc* authority. He told us what the School Board did on every day of the week. He told us what they did on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and even on Saturday and Sunday. It was a long tale of difficult, laborious, and probably, in some respects, ungrateful work, I do not know whether patiently accomplished, but, at all events, ardently grappled with. To the work of that body the hon. Gentleman proposes to add all technical education and all the work connected with the voluntary or non-provided schools which will now fall to the future education authority. I cannot believe that either the present London School Board, augment it as you may, or the London County Council, or any other central authority, can deal with the details of every educational problem.

Observe the point to which we have got. We are all agreed that there must be a central authority, and that this central authority must delegate part of their work to other authorities. Having reached these two principles we look round to see how to carry them out, what machinery there is at hand, and what machinery we can wisely create which will enable us to have a central authority and some degree of delegation. Is it not obvious that the London County Council should be the central authority, and that the Borough Councils should be the authorities to which the delegation should be made? It is by that simple and, I think, unanswerable train of reasoning that the Government have come to the conclusion, in the first place, that the London County Council should be the central authority, and, inasmuch as delegation is desirable, the other necessity is that that delegation should be made to the Borough Councils. As to the actual manner in which the delegation is to be carried out—whether the precise methods by which the statutory position given to the Borough Councils on the London County Council ought or ought not to remain part of the Bill or ought to be modified—these are important but subordinate questions. The only point on which we are concerned on the Second Reading of the Bill is whether we do or do not accept these two broad fundamental principles. That is the Government Bill, and I do not think it deserves any of the violent epithets which have been applied to it in the very moderate speeches to which we have listened.

What are the chief objections which the hon. Member for Poplar felt to making the London County Council, elected for general municipal purposes, deal with education as the central authority? He drew a melancholy picture of himself in the capacity of an elector having to decide between the rival claims of a candidate who knew something about drains and another candidate who knew something about education. That is the precise position which he, and every other London elector, holds in regard to technical higher education; and yet the hon. Gentleman says "I do not think the Government ought to bring in a Bill which would put me in that painful position." It is only within the last few months, when it began to be suspected that the Government were going to make the London County Council the educational authority, that there has been some diminution to the chorus of praise which used to pour forth from Gentlemen on all sides of the House, and most of all from Gentlemen opposite with regard to the excellent work done by the London County Council as the authority for technical education. The hon. Gentleman never before discovered that a knowledge of drains and of education were incompatible accomplishments. I would go further and would say, if his arguments were to be applied generally to the representative institutions of this country, you would not only destroy every Borough Council and every County Council in the whole country, but you would destroy this House itself. What would happen to us? We have got to decide matters connected with the Army, the Navy, Education, Foreign Policy, and every species of domestic legislation, and every kind of problem. I suppose the democratic principle of the future is that there must be a classification of all the questions on which the electors are interested, and that there should be in each case a separate election of an *ad hoc* body, and a separate election of experts to deal with each. That would be a very agreeable state of things! I am sure that these innumerable bodies so elected would deal very ingeniously and adequately with the topics with which they were entrusted. But do you think that we should have good government of the country? Would we all desire to see the management of naval affairs entirely given up to naval experts, would we all desire to see military matters given up to military experts, and educational affairs given up to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar, and so on, and so on? The whole principle of popular education is that you do not elect people for their simple and single qualification for one subject, but you recognise the fundamental fact that the interests of the community are so interlinked with one another, and especially so interlinked with finance that you must submit to some amateur system for dealing with these questions in order to have that community of administration without which the administration itself becomes hopelessly confused, and, above all, hopelessly extravagant. I am clearly of opinion that it is a most retrograde policy to go in for this principle of *ad hoc* election to deal with particular subjects authoritatively, and with power to draw on the rates. Of course you must give them power of dealing with the rates. The educational authority, whatever it is to be, whether it is the County Council or an *ad hoc* body, must have the power of drawing on the rates, because the body which does draw on the rates will always be the authority whatever its constitution, and that really is the answer to a great many criticisms which have been passed upon this Bill. We have been told the educational authority, meaning a Committee, does not represent the people. The Education Committee does not, of course, directly represent the people in the sense that some of them are especially selected, and some of them are not elected by the people for that purpose. But that is true of all Committees—of all Borough Committees—however you contrive. A man is not sent to the Town Council of Manchester to serve on a Committee, though he is asked to serve. He is sent to the Town Council of Manchester because he is supposed to be qualified to deal with matters municipal, of which serving on a Committee is one. In the same way, if this Bill is carried in its present form the representatives of the Borough Councils will be sent to join in this Committee as belonging to bodies which are competent to send representatives, and they will be elected directly by the people. It is all the greater fallacy from the fact that the Committee is not the education authority—the education authority, not only in name but in reality, is the rating authority, and that is in the main the County Council.

The. hon. Gentleman opposite says the County Council cannot possibly do the work—that we are throwing upon the County Council too much. That is a new argument for hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I do not know how far they mean to carry it, or whether they mean to have an *ad hoc* body for every duty which may have to be fulfilled within the Metropolitan area. [Cries of "No, no."] If they do not mean that I do not understand their argument. Your argument now is that the County Council are absolutely full up to the eyes and that they cannot do anything more. That being so you must have an *ad hoc* body to do anything outside their existing duties. Then there will be an *ad hoc* authority whenever you want to have a new duty performed, and London will be covered with a series of *ad hoc* bodies, all of them, I suppose, having independent powers. The London ratepayer is not a very happy person at present, and what his condition will be under such circumstances I leave it to hon. Gentlemen opposite to imagine. "But," said the hon. Gentleman, "the County Council could do the work if you increase their numbers." It may be necessary to increase their numbers at some time or other. That has nothing to do with the principles of this Bill. I have no abstract objection to it and I am not going to pronounce upon it until the matter is brought up especially and in connection with the general work of the County Council. If any Council in the country, whether the London County Council or any other County Council says "We cannot do the work with our present numbers," of course that demand would receive the most careful attention from any Government that might be in office at the time, and it would be folly to lay down any broad principle which would prevent a request of that kind being complied with. Therefore what I would ask the House to do at present, is to read a second time this Bill, which lays down a perfectly defensible machinery of principles for the local government of London. I do beg it to reject what the hon. Member desires, which is an *ad hoc* authority. If the House does reject it then I am convinced they will be driven back either to the actual plan of the Government or to some modification of that plan which does not interfere with its general principles. Those general principles simply consist of saying that the authority for London shall be the County Council, and inasmuch as decentralisation is an absolute necessity of the situation, decentralisation shall take place by statute, and that the bodies through whom the decentralisation is to be effected, and to whom the powers are to be delegated shall be those great Borough Councils which we have already brought into existence. Within the broad limits of those two great principles I see no reason why, if we think fit, we should not modify the Measure. But on the only point I can see which the House has to decide on the Second Reading viz., whether they will have the County Council as the authority or whether they will create an *ad hoc* authority, I earnestly press the House to utter no uncertain sound, and that in the interest of every recognised principle of government, in the interest of the principles we have already adopted for every other part of the country, we shall declare that education is not a function which ought to be divorced from the other great local duties which we throw upon our municipal bodies; and that London, which ought to take the lead in all matters of this kind, is not to be differentiated from the rest of the country to the great disadvantage of London itself.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I make no excuse for speaking on this important subject of the education of London, although I represent an agricultural constituency. It is a subject which will certainly be followed with interest by the counties which adjoin London. In passing the Act of last session the Government passed the greatest Reform Act of education which has been passed for thirty years. The great question before the House on the Second Reading of this Bill was clearly stated by the Prime Minister. Is the Government right in following the Act of 1902 and abolishing the *ad hoc* system? I think the Act of 1902 was right because it made possible, first of all, in elementary education, the equalisation of advantages of education amongst the children, that is to say, as regards the voluntary and board schools. Secondly, it gave power to the children—to anybody's child—to rise through the various grades of education from elementary to University education, and, thirdly, it concentrated and augmented the general interest felt in education by the country at large. The Act of 1902 assured the interests of education by setting up a local authority, not one single authority, but by making the duty of looking after education one of the duties of the local authority. That is to say, the Government, finding after thirty years experience of the Education Act that only one third of the area of England was covered by board schools and only one half of the children were contained in those schools, and that the educational opportunities were not becoming more, but less, uniform, abolished, not the board schools, but the School Board, in order that these great irregularities might be redressed by making it compulsory on some authority in each area in England to undertake a duty which up to that time had only been undertaken by one third. The Government left over the question of London, and I think we are all agreed that they acted in accordance with the views of Members on both sides of this House in treating London as a separate entity. In the King's Speech the Government promised to extend to London the principles of the Act of last session. So far as the Government carries out these promises, I am entirely with them, and am perfectly ready and anxious to support the Bill before the House, and to leave Amendments to be dealt with in Committee.

The principles which the Government apply to this Bill for London are two, viz.: (1) the abolition of the *ad hoc* authority and the subsequent consequences of that abolition; and (2) the suzerainty of the London County Council. Now I confess that, as far as absolute suzerainty of the London County Council goes, this Bill does not entirely meet all that I wish. But let me begin by arguing against the principle so strongly and eloquently put forward by the hon. Member for Camberwell—the *ad hoc* system. Educationally speaking, it seems simple to say "one object, one body;" but when that object is education, it is not so simple or so single as it would appear. It will not be possible, in this way, to represent higher or secondary education; therefore, when it comes to that, you will find that you must necessarily sacrifice that kind of education for elementary education. As regards elementary education, I think this country is not only equal to, but in advance of, other countries; but when it comes to higher or secondary education, it is behind the times. These committees are constituted under a scheme drawn up by the County Council, and approved by the Board of Education; and this is the method which is also largely adopted in this Bill. I contend that this power should be extended to the Borough Committees also, on whom will devolve the linking up of elementary schools with other institutions. Financially the *ad hoc* principle is indefensible; you give it a specific duty to discharge, together with an unlimited call on the county rates. Such a body is not responsible to its constituents for expenditure, as that is shifted to another body altogether; and when both bodies have schools to manage, overlapping, waste, and extravagance are inevitable. Constitutionally, I believe the *ad hoc* authority is wrong; and on this subject I should like to quote the remarks of a gentleman of Liberal opinions—I mean Canon Barnett. He says:—

> "An *ad hoc* body cannot be as representative as a body generally elected. It is unsound administratively; it tends to become an administering, rather than a directing body; there is not enough direction to occupy the thought or energy of the members; there are not sufficient subjects for their consideration, so they try to do themselves what officials could do better under their direction. The authority is expensive without being efficient."

That is the opinion of a man of great experience and of Liberal leanings, whose authority will be recognised by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House. Let me take the *ad hoc* authority in its electioneering aspect. Why do certain bodies object to an *ad hoc* authority being replaced by a Committee of the London County Council, elected, not for a single purpose, but for general municipal purposes. I will take a concrete case. An elementary teacher came from the North to London, and, fired by civic ambition, he stood as a candidate for the London School Board, and he was supported by all the efforts, all the ingenuity, and all the power of a well-known body connected with the teachers. Despite his ignorance of the conditions of London education, and of being almost a total stranger to the Metropolis, he was elected by a poll of nearly 19,000 in November, 1897. He sat for three years on the London School Board, and worked hard; but he fell out with the powerful body who had helped to ensure his return, and, I believe, had a lawsuit with them. At all events, considerable friction arose. He stood again for the London School Board in 1900, but, instead of getting 19,000 votes, he only got 405 votes, which hardly shows great popular interest in this *ad hoc* authority. The Government has then decided against an *ad hoc* authority, and proposes to extend to London the main principles of the Act of 1902; making the London County Council the supreme education authority. You will then have in London what you have in every other county — concurrent jurisdiction over education. You will have the County Council itself and the Committee appointed under the first Schedule; the London County Council being the ultimate authority through the power of the purse.

It is perfectly true that concurrent jurisdiction contains in itself certain elements of friction, but this has been provided against in the counties by a method which the first Schedule in the Bill renders impossible in London. Other County Councils have settled for themselves, with the approval of the Board of Education, the proportion of Councillors and non-Councillors on the Education Committee. In Essex and Berkshire two-thirds are County Councillors; in Lancashire and Leicestershire three-fourths are County Councillors, and in Cumberland the proportion is four-fifths. The advantage of this preponderance of Councillors is that the Council will not come into direct opposition with the Committee, and need not revise its decisions. The Parliamentary Committee of the County Council, in a statement they have issued, point out that under the Bill, as it stands, if the County Council find themselves out of harmony with a Committee nominally subordinate to them, they must do one of two things. They must either climb down and allow the Committee to pursue its own policy, or else they must burden themselves with the details of administering education without availing themselves of their power of delegation. That seems to me to be an absolutely fair and true criticism of the Bill as it stands; for the Schedule takes away from the County

Council the possibility of the Council having that preponderance on the Committee which other County Councils possess. In London, instead of a majority of two-thirds being possible, the Councillors would be only little more than one-third of the whole, namely, thirty-six out of ninety-seven. To make this Bill workable, you must, to my mind, drop out the twenty-seven representatives of the boroughs. I would leave in the representatives of Westminster and of the City of London, because they suffer more under the equalisation of rates than the others. You would then have seventy members on which the County Council would possess an absolute majority. I understand that the Government are not wedded to the absolute letter of this Bill; and I would ask them to reconsider the representation and power of the Borough Councils. At present the Bill seems to be a mixture of the County Council and the Water Board, and is quite unworkable. You cannot cut a piece out of a system of suzerainty, and another piece out of a system of decentralisation, and piece them together and say, "Here is a perfect system of education." There is no medium between making the County Council in name and in fact the supreme authority, or giving the County Council the go-bye altogether, and setting up an *ad hoc* authority. We know that the Government are opposed to an *ad hoc* authority, and, therefore, I maintain they will have to make the County Council absolutely supreme.

It has been suggested that the County Council should have more members created for educational purposes only. If the County Council ask for more members, by all means let their number be increased; but do not let the additional members be ear-marked for one purpose only. Let them be created for all the purposes of the County Council. I have never been a warm friend of the London County Council, perhaps because of their political bias; but on this occasion the Government have deliberately chosen them as the authority, and therefore their authority should be a real one. I would ask the Government not to ride their best hunter until they get to the big fence. If the Borough Councils are not to be directly represented on the Central Committee, they should certainly be given a large and honourable share of the work that would be delegated by the Central Committee. To get the work done well you must centralise; to get it done at all you must decentralise; by which I mean that the power of the purse must rest on the central body, but that the management of education should be delegated as far as possible. This delegation the Bill proposes; but I object to those powers being specified by statute, instead of by scheme; nor do I agree with two particular powers which are specified, namely, the choice of sites, and the appointment of teachers. The London County Council should hand over to the Borough Councils such powers and duties of management over elementary education as may be determined by a scheme drawn up by the local education authority, and approved by the Board of Education. Such a scheme should arrange for the grouping of provided schools in each borough area; and should assign to the managers of each group, subject to the veto of the Borough Council, the appointment and dismissal of teachers. Such a scheme could be varied from time to time with the consent of the bodies concerned, and the House of Commons need not be troubled with matters of detail. Such a method would prove elastic and workable, and it would be clear that the London County Council would be responsible for the whole educational policy and educational expenditure of London and the means of carrying both into effect. I will vote with pleasure for the Second Reading of this Bill, because I believe it will be possible and easy to make is a satisfactory solution of the difficulties involved. But in doing so, I would urge on the Government to amend the Bill in Committee in the following particulars; first, to omit Borough Councillors from the first Schedule, and secondly, to determine by scheme, and not by statute, the powers to be devolved on the Borough Councils, and to require the Borough Councils to act through composite Committees also constituted by scheme. This, I believe, will make the Bill easy and workable, and I hope the Government may see their way to accept the recommendations I have endeavoured to explain.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): Although not a London Member I make no apology for taking part in this debate. London is the metropolis of the Empire; it is the greatest city in the world; and it is the place in this country to which we ought to be able to look for educational light and leading. Now, I have listened to the speech of my hon. and gallant friend who has just sat down, and at first I thought I was listening to a speech in support of this Bill. Then there came a point at which my hon. and gallant friend began to show, towards the end of his speech, that there was a sting in it so far as this Bill was concerned, and finally he made a speech not in favour of this Bill but of quite another, an ideal Bill, the lines of which he sketched out, and in regard to which in my opinion there is a great deal to be said. But we must take the proposition of the Government as it stands. I listened to the speech of the Prime Minister, and at the beginning of that speech it carried my mind back to last year. The right hon. Gentleman said he was surprised that we were making such a fuss over what, after all, was largely a matter of machinery, because the principle had been accepted last year. The Prime Minister then embodied a principle in his Bill, of which I was and am now a warm supporter, the principle of taking the greatest of the representative local bodies, except Parliament itself, and devolving on them work which Parliament cannot do, imposing on them the making and the collection of the local rate and the responsibility for the education of the people. There are difficulties in the way of that principle in whichever way we may apply it. I said last year there were difficulties, and it might be injustices, in the Bill that became law. But so important was it to make a start in this direction that I was prepared, as I am now, to see that principle carried through in its integrity, leaving it to the future to correct what is in point of detail unfairly worked out. But is this Bill a mere machinery Bill to give effect to the principle? Last year the right hon. Gentleman would have had an easy way out of his difficulty; by the alteration of three words in a clause and the introduction of another clause, and that not a very long one, he could have made his Bill apply to London, and all grief and tears on the part of his own supporters, as well as of the Opposition, would have been to a great extent assuaged. The Prime Minister, however, has not chosen that course. He has brought in a Bill on the principle of recognising two authorities. I confess I have at times been puzzled for the motive of this. It did occur to me that there might be something Machiavellian in the reason for bringing these Borough Councils in in the way the Government had brought them in in this matter. It struck me that the controversy as to the Borough Councils might have been brought in to lead people's minds away from the religious controversy of which we heard so much last year, but of which we have heard so little on this occasion. I thought the Borough Councils were introduced to draw the enemy's fire, as it were, and that they were then to be withdrawn to leave a quiet passage to the Bill. But that was too far-fetched an idea. There is a famous picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds in which he has represented Garrick as being torn between tragedy and comedy. "Tragedy" has a somewhat striking face; there is something austere, somewhat of the Nonconformist conscience, in her lofty and ideal face, and Garrick is uneasy about not following her. But on the other hand there is the jovial and rollicking form of "Comedy" which is soliciting him to take the downward path. When I saw the President of the Local Government Board sitting by the side of the representative of the Education Department when this Bill was introduced I could not help feeling, when I thought of the Borough Council provisions of the Bill, that the President of the Local Government Board must be taken, in an educational and Pickwickian sense, to represent "Comedy," because the provisions of the Bill which we have before us are pure comedy.

The actual provisions of the Bill before us are to carry out the lines of that great principle of devolution to the County Council which is the basis of the Government Act of last year. I wish to make some observations on the proposals of this Bill, but before I can do so I must endeavour to define the standard by which these ought to be tested. London is not merely a great city, it is the metropolis of the Empire, and as such it has many miscellaneous educational interests which other cities have not. To my mind, important as it is, elementary education is the simplest and the easiest problem of those with which we have to cope. In London, since 1870, you have had a system, established and laid down on certain definite lines, which has been gradually worked up, and the business of handling the system is mainly a matter of administration. The business of elementary education is not the only, or even the most difficult, work with which this new authority will be concerned. Anybody who takes the trouble to read that remarkable Report on the Industries of London, published by the Technical Education Board of the London County Council last year, showing the decay of industries which used to flourish in London, and the failure of others to keep pace with the times, must have been struck by what the Report declares to be the cause—the want of more scientific forms of education in London. We do not possess here what is possessed in Vienna and Berlin, and even in the great American cities, because we have not interested ourselves in education in the large spirit that they have In this country we cannot look to the State as they can in Germany. In Berlin they have a magnificent educational equipment with which we in London have nothing to compare. Why is it? Because there is a great and powerful authority which single-mindedly gives its attention to these matters. In Berlin that authority is, in the main, the Government, which exercises a direct control even over the local authority. In England we have nothing of the sort. We look to the local authority, and the local authority must be left to undertake the task. Therefore, if you are going to look to the local authority in London as you do in Liverpool, Manchester, and other great cities, you must put the local authority in the strongest possible position; you must show that you trust them; you must not hamper or hinder them. If you adopt that principle, be in earnest, and carry it out to the fullest extent. Consider the work the educational authority in London will have to do. It is not merely the great and important business of elementary education. In 1898 this House passed a Bill creating a great teaching University for London. That University is in its infancy, but it is growing and making rapid progress. It is engaged in the work, not merely of co-ordinating education of a University type in London, but also of exercising influence on the secondary schools of the Metropolis. That was one of the functions for which Parliament designed the new educational instrument, and the new educational authority will have to deal with that. The general lines of our policy in this country forbid us to look to any great extent to the State. The bodies which have grown up under the auspices of the local authority in London, and those to which assistance has been given—such as King's College, University College, the London School of Economics, and others—without distinction of creed, show that we are at length making real and substantial progress in the work of developing higher education in London. But education of the highest type is not the only function of such an authority. Secondary education exists in London to a very large extent, but it is scattered, and lacks a pattern by which the schools might work one into another's hands and co-operate in their labours. Hampered as it has been, the Technical Education Board has done valuable work in assisting and co-ordinating secondary education, but the work has been only begun, and needs to be developed to a vast extent before the field can be said to be covered. I therefore come to the conclusion, without difficulty or hesitation, that the authority you require for London education must be an authority with a power and importance which you cannot have if you show want of confidence in the body to which you delegate the work, by hampering its proceedings by the introduction of other authorities. That being so, what is the existing position?

The existing position is, that you have a body which since 1893 has done a great deal of that part of the work of which I have been speaking. You have the London School Board and the Technical Education Board. I agree with much that fell from the Prime Minister as to the impossibility—the work having attained such dimensions—of doing these things in the way described by the hon. Member for Camberwell. All credit to the London School Board for having been able to do the enormous amount of personal and practical work that they have done, but the task is attaining a magnitude which makes it essential that you should resort more than they do to the system of employing the expert, controlling him carefully, laying down the principles which are to guide him, but at the same time leaving him to work out the details, which can be worked out by a country School Board or by a small authority with a small range of functions, but which cannot possibly be worked out when the problem is so vast as in London. Under these conditions, I am no more afraid of the London County Council not being able to do this business, in point of numbers, than I should be afraid of that body of less than twenty members—the present Cabinet—being unable to discharge the business of governing the Empire. It is only a question of creating the machinery by which to delegate the work. It must be extremely well-considered; control must be retained over the officials who give effect to your purposes; but we want the expert in education more at present than in any other stage, and I shall be glad to see, not only in regard to secondary and intermediate education, but also in regard to elementary education, the work of the expert brought even more into the plan than is the case at present. Therefore I am not troubled by the notion that you would require a body of enormous dimensions to do this great work. But I do think it is desirable, in making this fresh start, that you should not interfere, or that you should interfere as little as possible, with the continuity of the work. You have the business of elementary education going more or less, but the business of technical education and education of the University type is only in its infancy. In 1893 the London County Council's Committee became the technical education authority for London, and since that time it has done a marvellous amount of work. It has set going a machine with the operation of which I believe few Members of the House would wish to interfere. It comprises workers of every sort of opinion. It has working with it experts from the School Board and other sources, who carry on the work in such a spirit that no offence is given to any of the denominations, and the vested interests have been conciliated and brought into line. You have, therefore a very valuable body here. But you have to deal with elementary education, which this body, except indirectly, does not touch; you have also to deal with secondary schools, polytechnics (which provide technical education), and with University education, to which I attach great importance. I, for one, shall never be satisfied until I see students from the distant parts of the Empire flocking to the Universities in this country, and especially in London, for that higher education, that post-graduate training, in search of which they now go to the Continent or the United States. It is little short of a scandal that we should be able to provide so little education of that rank in the great Empire of which London is the Metropolis.

What is the work at present done by the Technical Education Board? It aids or conducts four schools for University training; it aids substantially eight polytechnics; it directs six London schools of arts and crafts; it assists eleven technical institutes; eleven schools of art, and a number of minor institutions, including forty-eight secondary schools; it maintains nearly 3,000 scholars who get their education wherever is most desirable; and it expends in so doing over £170,000 a year. There you have a body with the confidence of nearly every section of the community as far as its work goes. A body like that is not adequate to take up the enormous task you are now creating, but I say that it is extremely desirable that you should have a modern up-to-date organisation of that kind, that you should not destroy its life, but that you should preserve the continuity and develop that life as far as possible. At present that body consists of twenty directly-elected members of the County Councils, and fifteen co-opted members. For that body the Bill proposes to substitute a huge heterogeneous aggregation, of which thirty-six members are to come from the County Council, thirty-one from the Borough Councils, and twenty-five from outside. Those twenty-five ought to represent experts—just those people who cannot get in by popular election—women, representatives of tertiary education, representatives of the University, people who, in the ordinary course, would not be likely to desire, even if they were fitted, to run the racket of popular election. Nobody is more strongly convinced than

I am that the democratic principle is far freer from evils than any other principle, but I say that popular election cannot give you a body which contains these different, selected, and co-ordinated elements. It can give a body representing the sense of the community, which is generally the very best body through which to pick the experts, but direct popular election is not the way by which to bring the expert element into any body. The man of science, the specialist in the organisation of the University system, may not have the experience or capacity to appeal to the public, and men may be selected on account of special gifts which do not in themselves make them desirable representatives on such a body. Therefore I regard this principle of co-option as valuable. The London County Council is to be the rating authority. But the rating authority can be a really powerful authority, one with confidence in its Committee, only if it has a majority by which to dominate the general policy of that Committee. But, with the proportions here proposed, the central authority which you are going to trust, of which the Prime Minister spoke as being the pivot of the whole matter, is no longer in a position of supremacy. Look at the evil consequences of that. Twenty-five more members are to be chosen. They ought to be chosen to supplement the deficiencies which you will inevitably find if you trust to the chance of popular election. They ought to include the experts and specialists to whom I have referred; but the Council will be forced, if it is to maintain its majority in the new authority, the majority that will be essential for the maintenance of its position, to elect people who will be its own partisans. The biggest blot in the Bill is that you should impose on the County Council the necessity, if it is to maintain control over its own money, of prostituting the special trust you are giving it in the power of co-option for its own, though legitimate, partisan purposes. It cannot carry out its policy in any other way.

I was a cordial supporter of the principle embodied in the Act of last year. I am thankful that this session we meet in more of an educational and less of a sectarian atmosphere. That is a great blessing. One good result of the Act of last year is, that there has been excited in education an interest such as the British people have not had for many a long day, if ever before, and I would like to take advantage of that fact. London gives an almost unrivalled opportunity of showing what we can do, of showing that this Parliament is really capable of producing an educational machinery on a level with that which exists in other countries. If you must pick out the central body in London—which is the rating authority, and which it would be extravagant to replace by a new rating authority—if you must pick out that authority, and trust it, why in the name of heaven bring in the e twenty-five people to be diverted from the purposes for which they are introduced in the Bill by the necessity of the central body preserving the continuity and the dominion of its own policy? I do not see how that part of the Bill can possibly stand. There is another strong objection to the introduction of the members of Borough Councils in the way they are here introduced. Do not think that I am against the Borough Councils taking a great and prominent part in education. There is a great deal of work for them to do, but you must co-ordinate their work. Their work should be made to fit in with the work of the central authority, so as to leave as little room as possible for friction. But that aim is made very difficult of achievement if thirty-one members are to be set against thirty-six to fight for these other twenty-five. You cannot have the continuity in carrying on the policy of the Education Board which you could have if you simply trusted the County Council with this duty. In London I believe we are on the eve of great developments in education. If they are not made by Parliament or the County Council they will be made from private sources by public opinion. It is above all things necessary that your machinery should be of a kind to assist these great developments. You must have a body which will command respect for its educational efficiency because of its knowledge of these things, but the balancing of the thirty-six by the thirty-one in this unfortunate fashion seems to destroy the possibility of getting that smoothly-working authority which will possess the confidence of the educational public as the Technical Education Board does. Do not think I am saying you should take the Technical Education Board as it stands. You will have to modify and develop it, because of the very magnitude of the work and the far-reaching nature of the spirit in which you wish that work to be done in the future, but surely it can be worked out somewhat on the lines I have suggested.

I will venture to make a suggestion. I should like the Government to take the County Council, to give it the power of co-option, to eliminate at this stage the Borough Councils, and to regulate the co-option by the Council if they think it necessary to guard the public. I should like the co-opted members to include experts and women. Suppose you take twenty-five. I should like to see three representing the University. There is going to be an enormous amount of work done here in London by the University. If it was only in the training of teachers the University has a great function to discharge. I am not talking of the skeleton organisation at South Kensington, but of the whole of the education of the University type which is being co-ordinated. Above all things the training of teachers requires to be put on a proper footing. I yield to nobody in my respect for the splendid work the elementary teachers as a body have done, but they are suffering from something which is not due to fault of their own, but which has been imposed upon them by Providence or the late Mr. Lowe—I mean the effect of system of payment by results, which has turned the elementary teacher into a too business-like person, with contemplations which are too exclusively from the point of view of the elementary teacher. There are brilliant exceptions; there are no better examples than the three representatives of that body of teachers in this House. If our education is to be what it should, the elementary teachers must be trained from the University point of view as well as that which has obtained up to the present. I should like to see at least three members from the Universities upon that Committee. I should also like to see the City and Guilds of London and the City Parochial Foundations represented, for they have done an enormous amount of educational work. I should like to see the teachers specially represented, and schools, whether Roman Catholic, Jewish, Church of England, or Nonconformist, ought to have their representatives. There should also be some representatives specially representing secondary education. These, together with the women, are the elements which you ought to introduce into a body of this kind, but the essence of the scheme is that your rating authority should be supreme. I want to say a word or two about the management of local schools. According to Clause 3 the management is to be in the hands of the Borough Councils, and they are to manage the schools within their own areas. This is another great blot on the Bill. At the present time the schools in the East End of London will be in this difficulty; that they could not be managed by the local authorities in such a way as you manage them, by bringing in public-spirited people who come from other parts of London such as the West End. In Bethnal Green the school management is largely recruited from the West End, and hon. Members who are acquainted with the working of the London scheme know that the most valuable element in the management are strangers to the localities where they give their services. Your Bill destroys all that.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The words of the Clause provide that the Borough Councils have direct power to add persons who are not members of the Borough Councils.

*Mr. HALDANE: But have we any security that the Councils will do this?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: What security have you now?

*Mr. HALDANE: You want to secure continuity in the management and I should like to see the present local management preserved as far as possible. I do think it will be a very serious thing if we have a breach in the management of the elementary schools as it exists at the present time. I think it is essential that the Government should take some step in order that we may preserve that valuable element which you cannot replace in various parts of London. I am desirous to awaken interest in education in every part of London political society, and I would gladly bring the Borough Councils into this work. I am not the enemy of the Borough Councils; on the contrary, I wish to make the very best of them and get them to play a part in education. But do not give them the unsuitable part which is proposed in this Bill; you must have the courage of your own opinions. The Government is now at the parting of the ways; it can choose the path of virtue or the path of vice, the path of tragedy or comedy; it can go in the direction which has been urged by one distinguished minister, or in the direction in which it is being urged by the best public opinion and the majority of opinion in this House. Let the Government make up its mind and act according to the best light it can get; and if it goes boldly forward keeping education steadily in front of it, then I do not think it need be afraid of its policy for education in London.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): With most of what the hon. and learned Member has said in the course of his speech I agree, but he made one observation with which I do not agree. He said that in discussing this Bill we must take it as it stands. Had this been the Third Reading it would be right to take it as it stands, and accept or reject the Bill with all its virtues and all its vices; but on the Second Reading of a Bill, our duty is to look into the principle of the measure to see what that principle is, and whether it is one for the improvement of the education of the people. We can then trust to the Committee stage for removing the blemishes, and for adding other provisions which may be necessary to make it a more perfect Measure. The hon. Members who moved the rejection were perfectly right in their Motion. The hon. Member for Poplar said justly that there were three courses. First of all there is the *ad hoc* authority, specially elected for dealing with education in the Metropolis; secondly, you might take the London County Council; and thirdly, the principle of the composite body called the Water Board, composed of persons appointed by subordinate bodies. It really comes to this, that, practically, we have to choose between an *ad hoc* authority and a municipal authority without the County Council. That was the issue last year on the Education Bill, when the question was a directly-elected authority against the municipal authority, and every argument used by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar was used last year and was considered and rejected by a very large majority. I do not think he did justice to this point; I have over and over again said it is not an educational reason, but a question of local government and local finance. In this country you never will have effective local self-government until you have a single body in each district responsible to the ratepayers and solely responsible to the ratepayers for the finance. While you have municipal authorities, School Board authorities, and Boards of Guardians, each of them with rating powers, you will never be able to have economical or effective local self-government, and it is entirely on that ground, and not on any special educational ground, that the Government in the Bill of last year have preferred municipal authorities to the specially elected authorities representing the will of the ratepayers. I will not enlarge upon that point, because the House so emphatically preferred the municipal authority last year, that the arguments of the hon. Member for Poplar, excellent as they were, may be passed by.

The hon. Member for North Camberwell brought forth an entirely new argument against the municipal authority in London. He said that the London County Council was unable to perform the duties which the Bill would cast upon it, and he accompanied that by a very simple remedy, and that was, to increase the number of the County Council. To an increase in the number of the County Council I do not see any objection in principle. It is a question for the County Council, and if that body is unable to perform the duties thrown upon it by this Bill, an application for the increase of its members would be immediately listened to by this House. But although that is the opinion of the hon. Member for North Camberwell, it is not the opinion of many of the experienced members of the London County Council; they do not think so, and I agree with the hon. Member who has just sat down, that the London County Council is quite capable of performing the duty thrown upon it by the State. Those in this House who are in favour of municipal authority as against the specially elected authority ought, without any hesitation whatever, to vote this year as they voted last year, for a municipal as against an elected authority, and I have no doubt in giving my vote for the Second Reading of this Bill.

Then comes the question as to the desirability and possibility of making changes in the Bill in the course of the Committee stage. This question has been referred to by the Prime Minister. The first question is the constitution of the Committee. I agree with what was said by the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire, that the Committee, as at present constituted, is not a desirable one. There again the Prime Minister told the House that we can discuss this matter in Committee, and that the Government will be open to reason and argument, and will be willing to modify their scheme in accordance with the general wishes of the House. Therefore I think we may assume that the Committee as it stands in the Bill will not be insisted upon, and we are open to reconsider it. If I were able to have my own way about this matter, I would leave the London County Council absolutely free to appoint its own Committee. The London County Council has already shown immense liberality, and a great desire to get the best assistance it can for the work of higher education which has been entrusted to it. It has established a Committee which has been in existence for many years, and has given universal satisfaction. If I may go back to the reminiscences of the period of my official life, and I daresay the hon. Gentleman who has succeeded me will bear me out in this when he addresses the House, I would tell the House that, in all my relations with that Technical Instruction Committee, I formed the opinion that it was most business-like, most earnest, and a body totally free from all prejudice either political or religious. But if that is not to be, then I think the London County Council should have the same privilege which every other County Council in the kingdom was given by the Act passed last year. That is to say, that it should be allowed to submit to the Board of Education for their approval a scheme consistent with the provisions of last year's Act for the appointment of a Committee, and that scheme, I have no doubt, would be adopted by the Board of Education. I do not suppose they would stand up against so strong a body as the London County Council in any particular, but if they did not adopt the scheme it would ultimately come before the House in a Provisional Order, and if there was any difference of opinion between the London County Council and the Board of Education we should have to determine what scheme was to be adopted. If that cannot be, and if London is so peculiar in its educational interests, I confess that I should like to see what was suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire. I should like to see a scheme in the Schedule of the Bill of the kind he mentioned, giving a considerable majority to the London County Council and the rest prescribed by the House of Commons—the number of members to be appointed by the London University and the secondary schools —special care being taken that on this Board there was a proper number of women, because that was the weak point of the Bill last year, and that is the weak point of the Bill this year. It is a point that is only curable by Parliament amending the Local Government Act to make women eligible for those bodies that are entrusted with the duty of education. I do not think any restriction in the Schedule as to the number of women to be elected can be looked upon as anything but a temporary expedient, and the real way to cure the evil which there undoubtedly would be, if women were excluded from the Education Committee, would be to amend the Local Government Act in that particular. Therefore, it is quite clear that the House, when it gets into Committee on this Bill, can establish an Education Committee which will be in entire accordance with the principles of the Bill of last year, and through which the London County Council will be able to carry out the powers which are conferred upon it by the Act.

Now I come to the question of management and delegation of management. I am not an enemy of the Borough Councils. On the contrary, the Borough Council is a proper body in London to whom the powers, particularly in the management of elementary schools, though I do not confine myself to elementary schools, within the limits of the borough can very properly be delegated. But the borough authorities must be managers, and I think that to set up a second or double authority, so as to prevent the London County Council from having complete control over the managers, as well as over its officers, would be most detrimental to education. It is also quite essential, as stated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman in his speech, that something should be done in the Bill to preserve continuity. I think the present provisions of the Bill in that respect are very crude and would cause very great difficulty, notwithstanding the power which the Secretary to the Board of Education pointed out to secure continuity. I do not think that is enough. I think they ought to put in the Bill something that would ensure that those powers will be carried out by the Borough Councils and that they will secure continuity. May I call the attention of the House to what is the existing state of things? Perhaps hon. Members do not realise what that is. At the present moment in London—I am speaking of elementary schools—there are 1,750 managers of elementary schools, of whom no less than 550 are women. The number of Managing Committees is 180, and the effect of the Bill, if carried as it stands, would be that the number would be reduced to twenty-nine, being a Committee in each borough. Now, though they have powers to appoint on the Committees other members, they would not necessarily have one of the old managers on the Committee, and there is no obligation to have one. These Committees—one for each borough—have a most unequal amount of duties to perform. In the City of London there are only two provided schools, so that there would be a Committee for these two schools. In Westminster there are not more than three or four provided schools, and the same condition of thing, prevails in Kensington, Paddington, and probably some of the other West End boroughs. On the other hand, in the borough of Stepney, in the East End of London, there are thirty-six provided schools. There are 30,000 children and 600 teachers whom the Committee for Stepney would have to manage. Very much the same remark applies to Islington, Camberwell, and a number of East End parishes. The extent of the boroughs varies enormously. The borough of Wandsworth is five square miles, and extends from Streatham to Clapham. The borough of Woolwich is also five square miles, and it is separated into two parts by the River Thames, which is sometimes impassible. I think the House will see that one Committee of management for very populous or extensive boroughs would be extremely inconvenient and inefficient. I think there ought to be provision in the Statute for making this delegation, and we ought to make it workable and reasonable. We should require that there should be one Committee to every Parliamentary constituency. That would make the Parliamentary constituencies coterminous with the borough districts, and that would make fifty-eight instead of twenty-nine Committees. With regard to the constitution of these Committees, I think we ought to prescribe by the Bill that a certain proportion of the members should be Borough Councillors, and that a certain proportion should be from the existing managers, of whom a certain proportion of not less than one-half might be women. In that way you would be able to get the whole of the districts covered by the Committees to whom the elementary education powers were delegated.

There is another thing, I think, that is not provided for in the Bill, and that is special schools for the blind, the deaf, and the weak-minded. These are not properly local schools, for they serve great districts. Clearly these schools ought to be managed by separate managers, of whom a large proportion should be women. Those schools ought to be specially provided for. There is one more thing I ought to say, and that is as to the appointment of teachers. It would be the greatest possible calamity, and it would be a calamity which the Bill as it stands would bring about, if, for the service of the whole of the districts, we had twenty-nine different services, and we ought to put something in the Bill which will secure that, as far as the teachers go, there should be only a single service for teachers for the whole of the Metropolis. I do not think that is at all irreconcilable with a considerable amount of delegation to the Borough Councils, or those Committees of the Borough Councils which I have indicated.

A similar system is now carried out by the London School Board. Although there is but one service of teachers for the whole of London, the School Board allow the appointment of assistant teachers, and especially the first appointment of teachers to be made on the recommendation of the managers, and they allow the managers to appoint head teachers from a list which is sent to them by the School Board. There is no reason why that plan should not be continued. Why should not the Committee of the Borough Councils make the first appointment of teachers, and when once they are appointed they should become members of the great London service of teachers, so that they may be placed on the list sent out and from which all districts may select teachers. My object is only to show that the great principle of municipalisation in the first place is the foundation of this Bill. In the next place this great principle of municipalisation can be carried out without any of the objections which had been raised by critics on both sides of the House. We can secure absolute supremacy and absolute control of the London County Council over the whole work of education, and at the same time secure the delegation of very important duties to the London Borough Councils; and if these duties are carried out by the Borough Councils in the spirit in which I am sure they will be, it will give them immense local interest in, and an immense local influence over, the matter of education.

*MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I cannot but think that if a Member of this House had come in here for the first time and had listened to the debate during the last half hour he would have come to the conclusion that the London Education Bill had been withdrawn by the Government and that the House had resolved itself into a sort of amiable and non-partisan Committee to recommend the bases of a totally new Bill. I have not been in this House so long as many Members of it, but I have been here long enough to know that the experience this afternoon on the Second Reading of a Bill is almost unique in Parliamentary history. We are not discussing a solid and actual measure which exists upon paper, backed by the Government and really before the House, but we are discussing something that may happen, when by the process of voting on the Second Reading an exact and specified measure is put out of the way and a new kind of measure, changed in all its details, has come before the Committee of the House. What we are now supposed to be discussing is the London Education Bill, brought in by a great Government with an immense majority, a Government which knew for more than twelve months that they must submit such a Bill to Parliament, and had had many months to prepare it. I submit that it is hardly respectful to the capacity and industry of this House that a debate of this kind should be allowed to go on. It is true that we had from the Prime Minister an intimation that on some details of the Bill there is no finality: but the Prime Minister is a man of great subtlety of mind, and carefulness of statement, and I did not gather from his words any assurance that the Bill is to be amended in Committee to the extent which my hon. friend the Member for Haddingtonshire, or even the right hon. Member for Cambridge University, supposed. What right have we to assume from what was said this afternoon on behalf of the Government, that the Borough Council element on the Education Committee of the education authority would vanish in the Committee stage? And if that assumption is unwarranted, the present debate is vitiated. There are hon. Members opposite, and at least one on the Treasury Bench, who are determined that the Borough Councils shall form a constituent part of the education authority. The brilliant suggestions of my right hon. friend the Member for Haddingtonshire and of the right hon. Member for Cambridge University are not to the purpose, and are beside the mark, because we have no assurance that the Borough Councils will be deleted from the Bill. I suggest that we should leave the discussion of an ideal measure, of an aerial measure, and return to the consideration of the concrete measure on paper which, though short, is bad all through. It is clear from the circumstances attending the introduction of the Bill, and all that has taken place between that stage and the Second Reading, that although the Government had months at their disposal for the preparation of the Bill, it was conceived in haste and shapen in confusion. It was brought in without due notice, and hurriedly passed its First Reading just before Easter, and too short an interval was allowed to elapse between the First and Second Reading. The London County Council and the London School Board, and many of the London Borough Councils, have had no opportunity of meeting to consider this Bill, and pronounce an opinion upon it. These circumstances are suspicious, and weaken my belief or hope that during the Committee stage the Bill will be amended into a workable and satisfactory measure. The haste in asking for the First Reading of the Bill was due to the fear that London opinion might be pronounced in a way entirely adverse to the Bill, and I feel sure that the brief interval that has occurred between the First and Second Reading was due to a similar fear. The Bill was received on its introduction with universal condemnation, not only by the Liberal, but by the Unionist Press, in fact, I may say, generally, by the whole Press of London. Then followed the condemnation of many of the Borough Councils representing half the population of London; and had a greater interval been allowed, I am sure that some other Borough Councils would also have pronounced against the Bill. As for the London County Council, it is to-day, in all probability, adopting the recommendation of its Parliamentary Committee, and pronouncing against the Bill. The Bishop of Rochester, the Bishop of half London—that part of the Metropolis which most requires a satisfactory Education Bill—and who was friendly to the Act of last year—has declared against the very vital principle of the Bill and has preference for a totally different kind of authority. The Prime Minister says that this is a Bill of machinery. It may be so on paper; but it is not a matter of machinery only or mainly, but a matter of education of the children of London to the number of a million. What the Bishop of Rochester said was—

> "It is from the side of the school and the children that I am most apprehensive of the Bill."

That is the most vital condemnation that can be uttered by anybody interested in education. The side of the schools and the children! That is the side. For what does the education exist? For what is the machinery set to work? For the schools, and for the children; and if the Bishop of Rochester, who is largely responsible for last year's Act, says that from the side of the schools and the children he is most apprehensive of this Bill, then the Bill is unworthy of the support of this House, and ought not to receive a Second Reading. If it is bad for the schools, and for the children, it is bad all through. Then other persons who claim to know something about the schools and the children have declared that the Bill is bad all through. The secondary school teachers condemn the Bill, the elementary school teachers condemn it, and the school attendance officers condemn it. Those who know most about the subject, those who know most about the children and the schools and the really important phases of the whole question, condemn the Bill. Women who are specially interested in the children and the schools have expressed their opinion of the Bill, and what do they say? The Women's Local Government Society, after considering the measure, say—

> "The evil effect of the Bill upon the co-operation of women in the organisation and administration of education is an effect even more seriously disabling than that brought about by the Education Act of last year."

Again, I will quote what was said by the leading organ of local government in this country—the *Local Government Chronicle*—an organ of municipal administration, imbued with the spirit and conversant with the letter of all the Acts of Parliament which govern our local municipal life. It says—

> "It is not in accordance with the spirit of the age that a body which is to have control over such large funds and such extensive interests should be constituted in such a heterogeneous way. It is putting the clock back to have a great and important branch of administrative work handed over to an authority resembling in many particulars that effete and corrupt institution the Metropolitan Board of Works, which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer extinguished nearly fifteen years ago."

That observation holds good to-day. We have had no pledge, and no assurance that we are not to have a Metropolitan Board of Works under another name. This Bill does not please the School Board, the Technical Education Committee, the clergy, and those who are most interested in the metropolitan schools. I have quoted what the *Local Government Chronicle* says of the Bill; let me quote what the *Pilot*, that distinguished organ of cultured Anglican opinion—says—

> "The London Education Bill has come in for almost universal condemnation. No one has a good word to say for it as it stands."

In this House the only good word came from the Prime Minister, who himself spoke in the future tense and talked about certain principles in the Bill which were essential, and then threw the rest overboard. But the point I wish specially to bring before the House is that the Bill, as it stands, is what we are going to vote upon to-day or to-morrow—not an imaginary measure. The recommendation of the *Pilot* is rather comprehensive. It says—

> "That the Bill requires the excision of every section after the first, and also of the first Schedule,"

and then you may have a reasonable measure!

The whole position is an absurd one induced by a hasty and ill-considered Bill; a Bill not based on educational considerations and not based upon the principles of last year's Act. There is no parallel between the machinery required for London and that set up for the country in the Bill of last year, and I say you ought to depart from the Act of last year in dealing with the case of London. I submit that the most practical way would have been to create a special authority, directly elected for the purpose of education and for that purpose only. I want to know why the Government did not take that course. Rumour has it—and rumour is full of tongues, but some of them tongues of Members of this House and Members sitting on the Government side—rumour has it that the Government were balancing in their minds between two plans. One plan is embodied in the Bill before the House, and another provided that the London education authority was to be specially elected by direct election for educational purposes. Why has that plan been rejected? It has been rejected as the result of partisan prejudices and political predilections; a preference for the Borough Councils and a dislike to the London County Council. Speaking in the names of the children and the schools, I do regret that a dislike for the existing School Board, a dislike for direct election, a predilection for Borough Councils against the London County Council, or other considerations of that kind, should have caused to be brought forward a Bill like this one, which is inadequate, imperfect, unsuited to the conditions and needs of London, and can hardly be amended even by weeks in Committee. It is bound to be only temporary, and must in the long run be replaced by a measure setting up for London an authority for educational purposes alone. The present Bill contains all the objectionable features of last year's Bill, and when to all that you add for London—the capital of the Empire, that ought to set an example to all other places in the land—a thoroughly vicious and impossible plan for managing education, then I say that no one who knows anything about it can hesitate to vote sincerely and heartily against this Bill

MR. MILVAIN (Hampstead): I would remind hon. Members that it is the Empire which has made the Metropolis and not the Metropolis the Empire. In my humble judgment it is integrity, honesty, and industry which has promoted the Empire far more than education. I admit that changes in the world demand something more in the training of our children, and I admit that higher education is essential, but I deny that London, as the Metropolis of the Empire, is entitled to any better education, or any special form of education, which is not generally applicable to the country at large. I have listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Haddingtonshire, and there is one expression which he made use of with which I cordially agree, viz., that it is a difficult thing to make plans. I think if it were desirable to put forward an illustration of that simple proposition you have only to look to the speeches which have been made by all the Members of the House who have spoken on this question since the debate began. No two Members have agreed as to what ought to be the educational authority for London. Everyone has given us different ideas, with the exception of the hon. Member who has just sat down and the hon. Member for Camberwell, who are both in favour of *ad hoc* representation. At the same time it must be remembered that they are, I assume, members of the Association of Teachers. I take no exception to that, but I should like to know what would have happened if the Government had introduced any Bill that can be mentioned framed on lines suggested by hon. Members opposite. If they had gone for the London County Council pure and simple the Bill would have been torn to pieces, whilst one framed on the *ad hoc* system would also have been torn to pieces. This is a question of principle, and the principle in this Bill is what is the machinery which is to be applicable to London, having regard to the principle of the Bill that was passed last year. The prevailing principle of that Bill was decentralisation, and I think if anything would justify decentralisation in London it is the remarks of the hon. Member for Camberwell in reference to the cumbrous work the School Board has to perform in London, and the numerous children it has under its care and protection. The best way to get rid of all that work is by means of decentralisation. That being the principle of the Bill, I want to know what is the object of decentralisation. It is in the first place to awaken the authorities to their responsibilities on educational matters, secondly, to elicit the interest of parents in the education of their children, and thirdly, to enable ratepayers to say how, consistent with economy, education can be carried out with efficiency.

These being the principles of the Bill of last year, I attended a meeting of my constituents early this year and had the boldness to endeavour to apply those principles to what ought to be the educational authority for London. It must be remembered that these metropolitan boroughs have only recently been created—I suppose on the same principle as decentralisation—but they are still in their infancy. They have no power of rating in reference to education, and having regard to that I expressed my opinion that elementary education ought to be in the hands of the metropolitan boroughs, and also that, with the object of the metropolitan boroughs being able to learn what are the duties in reference to education, no matter what the authority was, they should be appointed by the Government to have a right to have a representative on the rating authority. I was of opinion that there ought to be co-opted members who were experts in education, and that there ought also to be ladies who would render very good service as regards education. My object was that the metropolitan boroughs should be educated in their duties in order that when the time came they might be able to throw aside the County Council or the Education Board, each individual authority managing education within its own area. If I had known the amount of correspondence that my proposal would evoke, I might have hesitated before making it. Some of my correspondents advocated an *ad hoc* authority; the greater number were in favour of the County Council, and condemned the municipalities as the very worst authorities on the ground that their representatives were narrow-minded, bigoted, and ignorant. I cannot think that these strong expressions are justified. Certainly, they are not justified so far as the Municipal Council of cultured Hampstead, which I have the honour to represent, is concerned. But if these criticisms were justified would it not necessitate zealous educationists throwing the weight of their influence into public life, in order that men qualified to discharge the duties should be returned on representative institutions. If educationists would throw their zeal into public life there would be a better class of representatives, assuming the criticism is justified that the present representatives are narrow-minded, bigoted, and ignorant. I assume the whole of the Opposition are united in their opposition to the representation of the municipalities on the education authority. That cry comes with ill grace from those who formerly advocated: "Trust the People." I have every confidence in the people. Let us for a moment consider what an *ad hoc* authority is. It is a body which expends the rates, but is not responsible for them — a body of irresponsible experts, generally extravagant, and admittedly elected by 15 per cent. or 20 per cent. of the electors. I do not think that that is a body calculated to know the needs of the people or the wishes of the parents as to the manner in which their children ought to be educated. The County Council has admittedly far too much to do already; and if the County Council were to be the only education authority, it would do as it did with reference to technical education —delegate the matter to a Committee. That would be a slight, I go further and say an insult, on all the London municipalities. Every borough in England and Wales appoints its own education authority; and I am at a loss to understand in what respect Hampstead is less efficient or less public-spirited than any borough in England or Wales. There has been a circular issued showing the relative populations of the metropolitan boroughs and what are called non-county, with populations of under 150,000, and I find Hampstead has a population of over 81,000, a larger population than Devonport, Newport, Wigan, and other places, all important boroughs in their counties and all having their own education authority. Now, Sir, I have always maintained, and shall continue to maintain, that, whatever the system of education may be, the metropolitan boroughs are entitled to representation. I am not so foolish as to insist that they shall have a majority. What my desire is, is that they shall be educated to their duties. It is not necessary that they should be in the majority at once, but I have no doubt in course of time they will be educated to their duty and their responsibilities and will not shirk them. I think this is the only Bill which is consistent with the provisions of the Act of last year, and however much it may be amended in Committee, subject to the metropolitan boroughs being represented on the Board, I shall vote for it.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I am glad the Government have at last got one solid supporter to this Bill, especially as he comes from such a cultured district as Hampstead. Now I desire to protest against the way in which London is being treated by the Government in this matter. The whole handling of the Bill has been grossly and manifestly unfair. This Bill was introduced and read a first time on the day the London County Council separated for its recess, and there has been no meeting since. The School Board also has not had time to consider this matter, and now we are being hurried along to the Second Reading without either of these great authorities having had time to consider it. The Bill itself is an apparently inoffensive one of five short clauses, but the London County Council have taken the opportunity of printing for us the proper Bill of the Government, and I now hold it in my hands. They have printed in full all the clauses the Government have adopted by reference, and I find, instead of a simple Bill of five clauses, we have got a great document of twenty-eight pages, with as many most intricate clauses. The Bill which I hold in my hand is the honest measure, and the Government ought to give official sanction to the printing and circulating of this document to Members before it proceeds with the Second Reading. I desire to second the appeal of my hon. friend on my right with regard to the way the House handles this subject. We do not want any reconstruction or Amendment by amateurs either on this side, or below the Gangway on that side. We should deal with the Bill as it is. I listened to the hon. Member for the Cambridge University, and how on earth he can vote for the Second Reading I cannot for the life of me understand. He does not agree with a single clause of the Bill. He says there is a vague principle in the Bill, and in consequence of that he will vote for the Second Reading, but he wants to amend it in every particular, and hon. Members on this side want to do the same. I am very much obliged to hon. friends on this side for the way in which they have listened to the debate and spoken and assisted us in this matter, because I believe London deserves a little more consideration from the Liberal Party than they have given to it. My right hon. friends may say: There are only nine of you against fifty-two. How, under these circumstances, can you claim to speak for London?

But I deny that the fifty-two represent London in this matter. If you go to the bodies which are interested in the Local Government of London you receive a very different expression of opinion, I would ask hon. Members most respectfully not to give us any more alternative Bills which are entirely different to the Government Bill; to follow each of the Bills which are suggested in every speech leaves our minds in such a state of confusion that they are perfectly useless to us. My hon. friend the Member for Camberwell said it would be easy to make an excellent Bill, but what he meant was, that if he were in power, with a majority of 120 behind him, he would make an excellent Bill. But a great deal must be done before he is in a position to submit any Bill at all. Let us not, therefore, go a step beyond our proper position, which is to express our opinion upon the Bills the Government introduce.

Now, I cannot help being struck by the bad reception which this Bill continues to receive. When the Bill was read a first time there was not a single Member who spoke in the House who did not suggest Amendments and alterations in it, and that criticism has gone on ever since. The hon. and learned Member for Stretford recently made a most interesting speech to his constituents in reference to this Bill, and he had not a good word to say for it. That was very remarkable, because he is a constant supporter of the Government. He made one very unfavourable criticism, and that was, that the Borough Councils were not the proper authority to have powers under the Bill; that the local authority set up under the Bill should be the rating authority of the district. The educational rate is one for the whole of London, and not for any locality in it; therefore the authority under the Bill should represent the whole area of London. That is a strong criticism to make, and the Government ought to pay attention to such criticism. The hon. Member for the Oxford University is to speak at a meeting of the London Diocesan Conference to-morrow, and I have seen the Resolution which is to be proposed, and that is, that the Bill should be passed into law but that the Council will welcome amendment to it. The Government ought not to ask us to adopt a proposal of this kind which does not appear to have received favour anywhere. It was pointed out in the First Reading that it destroys the London School Board, but what does not seem to be so generally noticed is that it also destroys the excellent educational work that has been carried out by the London County Council. The same authority will no longer exist to do this work in London; the Technical Education Council of the London County Council will be as much abolished as the School Board itself. The great fault of the Bill is that it is opposed to the right principle of local government for London. I allude to its treatment of the Borough Councils. The principle on which the Borough Councils were founded is this. They are set up to deal exclusively with local matters which can be dealt with without respect to any other locality and without regard to the Metropolis as a whole. But education affects London as a whole and the cost is put on the general rate, and yet these bodies are tacked on and enabled to deal with this great matter. The principle ought to be carried to the full length of the proposals, and if it were we should have twenty-nine different systems and twenty-nine different authorities; and as it would be absurd if carried to its logical conclusion, we ought not to adopt it at all, but adopt instead the right principle of one authority for the whole of London.

Another point is the great cost of this Bill and the great new burden which will be placed upon London to pay the rate. I put a question to the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill at Question time in regard to the matter and asked him how much the Exchequer grant would amount to. He could not give me an answer at the time but he has sent me a courteous reply since, from which it appears that the new grant-in-aid will amount to 7s. 6d. on every child in London. That is a large additional sum and that is the aid grant from the Exchequer quite apart from the burden on the rates, and the burden on the rates will not be less than 1½d. in the £. Another important matter to be remembered is that a quarter of the rate for the whole country is paid by London, and when we think of the additional burden thrown upon London in this matter we ought to pause before we make the fatal breach in the principle that control ought to go with taxation, and see that a legitimate amount of control is extended to London at the same time. Another point has been mentioned, but only parenthetically, by the right hon. Member for the Cambridge University, but it is important. It is assumed by the representation given by these Borough Councils they will have comparatively equal duties under the new Act. They will have nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman has pointed out that there will be only four or five schools under the great local authorities like Westminster and the City, but Islington will have thirty-six schools, and Camberwell will have thirty-six. That shows that the incidence of this Bill locally has not been considered by the Government. It must make a great difference to the local authority whether it looks after three or thirty-three schools. The only other point of detail is the treatment of women by the Bill. Everybody agrees that the women who have served on the London School Board, and the 500 at present on the Management Committees have done excellent work, but there is no provision for women in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman's position therefore is illogical. He desires to see these women's work continued, but what guarantee is there that it will?

SIR JOHN GORST: I said I was in favour of so amending the Bill as to leave the position of these women not dependent on the will of the local Council but to put them in a statutory position.

*MR. LOUGH: I quite agree, but that is a strong Amendment to suggest. We have not got it in the other Bill. The Government have not made us any promise with regard to it. But the right hon. Gentleman went further; he agreed to give the schools into the hands of the Borough Councils on which these women have no right to sit. He knows what efforts we have made to get the law altered so that women might be admitted as members of the London Borough Councils, and how little likely we are to succeed on this. The position in which these women are placed after the work they have done for education is anomalous. This House is treating them very ungratefully indeed. But my main objection to the Bill is that it seems to offer a large endowment to sectarian institutions. It is really a Bill for endowing the Church, and I might say more than one Church. It is also a Bill for endowing private institutions, and private schools will get large sums under it. And finally it contains proposals for endowing unnecessary schools. I think the burdens of the people are great enough at the present moment without pouring out public money in this underhand and unfair manner. The position of the Established Church is strengthened unfairly in London as against the Free Churches. This point has not been considered sufficiently. The London School Board, through thirty years of its existence, has acted fairly towards the Free Churches in London. The board schools were considered to be so fair that they led to the abandonment of many schools belonging to the Free Churches in London, and the substitution of schools under the School Board for them. A great deal has been heard of the suffering of the Nonconformists in the 8,000 parishes of England in which there was no school but a Church school. I do not think the Nonconformists in these places have been subjected to nearly the same injustice as the Nonconformists of London will be subjected to under this Bill. The School Board is an institution regarded as favourable to the Free Churches and Nonconformists. Under Sir Charles Reid, and many of its earlier Chairmen, the character of its teaching was such as appeared to afford Nonconformists every security, but everyone who looks carefully at this measure will recognise that it is intended to strengthen the control of the Church over schools. It will act through Committees largely dominated by the local clergymen, who are generally bitter partisans and sometimes narrow-minded sectarians, and it will be a terrible thing if the House sanctions education being put so completely under their control. In Islington the moment this Bill was launched many of my constituents took the view I have put forward of the measure, and I think something should be done to preserve the character of London education to secure that the schools throughout this great city shall be devoted to education and not to the promulgation of any particular creed, and in this way steps should be taken to protect the interests of the Free Churches. There is not, as it stands, an atom of popular control in any part of this Bill. Take for example the London County Council. It is supposed that the London County Council will be the authority, but it is not, for it is in a minority and it cannot do what it likes. The London County Council is obliged to elect a Committee of a certain kind, and its control over education is taken away. The Prime Minister reminded the House that the Borough Councils were elected by popular vote. That is so, but they will only send one representative. How can the Borough Councils select perhaps one man out of seventy who will have to form a part of the education authority for all London? Even when electing County Councillors the voters will remember that the County Council is not the authority. Therefore this Bill destroys that popular control of education which has been enjoyed by Londoners for many years past. It is said that at School Board elections only a small number have voted, but my hon. friend the Member for North Camberwell has proved that the proportion is larger than has been suggested. I am not, however, convinced by the argument that a small poll means that the people do not take an interest in education. I think the Government should not do anything that will tend to diminish the interests of the people in educational work, but on the contrary they should see that direct popular control is given equal to that enjoyed in the past. I can find little that has been said in favour of this Bill. The authority set up is a sham authority and it is a retrogade measure of the worst kind. The main object is to strengthen the position of the Church against the Free Churches. By this conspiracy, which has now been taken up by the Government, the clergy think, with the majority which they enjoy, that they will be able to foist upon London a narrow and sectarian institution calculated to further the interests of their own sect rather than the broad principles of national education.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: With regard to what has just been said by the hon. Member for West Islington, I wish to say that the Bill of last year was passed after the fullest consideration, and, although a certain line of policy was adopted which was not entirely agreeable to many Churchmen, I do not see the slightest use in raising a question of that kind again after it has been decided by the House, and therefore I intend to take no such course. I have been interested in the speeches in the debate to-day, because they display considerable diversity of opinion among the ranks of the Opposition. Personally, I was very much disposed to agree with many of the observations that fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Haddingtonshire, and I felt there was much in his speech which I should very gladly endorse, but his example was not followed by the hon. Member for West Nottingham or several other speakers, and I gathered the opinion that the opposition to the Bill is not so much because they cannot lay hold of some particular failing in it—because the Government, through the mouth of the Prime Minister, stated that many details will be treated in Committee with considerable elasticity—but because they cannot induce the Government to establish an authority *ad hoc*. I am entirely opposed to the institution of an *ad hoc* authority, elected, as this ugly barbarism means, for the express purpose of education only. I have long felt that the whole argument with regard to it is exceedingly futile. Do hon. Members really suppose, even now, that the London School Board obtains a large number of experts because it is an *ad hoc* authority? If when they speak of experts they mean teachers, no doubt some members of the National Union of Teachers do get into the School Board, and the fact has been the subject of some comment. But the candidates chosen at present are, as a rule, not experts. I do not wish to go further than my own case. I first went on to the London School Board in 1894. Why was I selected? I had not made a very special study of education at that time. Let me confess it openly. At the moment I was selected I had never been in a London board school. I was interested generally in the subject of education in the country, but I could not for a moment claim that I was an expert in the matter. I venture to think—and I say it from my experience on the Board itself—that that was the condition of very many, probably the large majority, of the candidates who stood for the School Board. Therefore it is somewhat ridiculous to say that unless you have an *ad hoc* authority you will not get proper attention to education. My desire is that the administration of education, like the administration of many other of our important national requirements, ought to be conducted from a broad, general point of view with due regard to all the other interests and matters involved. I do not see why the London County Council cannot take a broad national view and administer education just as it administers many other matters. One of the advantages of looking at the thing in proper perspective is that you can have more regard to the financial position. I think that the body that looks after these matters should have due regard to the allotment of money to the various directions in which it is desired. I am the last to say that education ought not to receive a very large amount of money, but I think that in the allotment of that money due regard should be had to other requirements, and the authority ought to make sure that all those other requirements are also carried out on a proper financial basis.

I also value the proposal to co-opt. That is the true way to get the experts we require for this purpose. It brings in men who would not stand for popular election. I can quite believe that there are many such men. Let me, for instance, mention Dr. Garnett, who probably would not care to face the turmoil of popular election. He does admirable work on the Technical Education Board. [An Hon. Member: He is a paid official.] Yes, no doubt, but I mention him as a type of the men I should like to have co-opted on the new authority, and who very likely would not stand if they had to go through a popular election. I am also in favour of women being on the new authority. They have done to my knowledge much valuable work on the School Board. Miss Davenport Hill was an admirable worker, and perhaps more particularly as regards the industrial schools. There are numbers of women who, I have not the least doubt, do not like to face popular platforms. There again the principle of co-option comes in, and is a valuable one for the purpose. My only object in urging that there should be a general authority and not a mere *ad hoc* authority is because I think that experts, who very often constitute *ad hoc* authorities, are disposed to administer education as if it were the be-all and end-all of human existence. That, in my opinion, it certainly is not, and though it is of great relative importance with regard to other national and municipal questions, it ought to be treated in proper proportion, and ought not to be administered by mere enthusiasts, without regard to other subjects. I agree with the general principles of the Bill. I approve thoroughly of the central authority of the London County Council, and of the delegation of powers to the Borough Councils, but, speaking for myself, I am not quite sure that I can approve of an Educational Committee which puts the London County Council in a minority. I feel that if we are going to give the London County Council the financial control, and if it is to be responsible for the financial management of the central education authority, if, in fact, it is to hold the purse strings, it should have the majority. That is a proposal which cannot be gainsaid, and I shall be very glad if my hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education would consider that matter in Committee. There is no doubt that, if the Bill remains as it is, the dominant party in the London County Council will use their powers of co-option in order to give themselves a majority on the Education Committee, and I want the co-opted members to be independent experts. The London Members say that they want to have a Committee of nearly a hundred, but I think that would be cumbersome and unworkable. It seems to me that the desire to retain the representation of the Borough Councils is largely because the London members have had considerable pressure brought to bear on them by local persons. [Cries of "No!"] Well, I cannot help thinking that some kind of pressure has been brought to bear upon them. The appetite of the Borough Councils has been whetted by the original proposals in the Bill, and it is but natural that they should desire to retain what is therein granted. It is left for us provincial members to save the London members from themselves. In any case, I hope for the taking away of the representation of the Borough Councils on the Committee, while ensuring to them a large amount of power delegated by the London County Council in regard to certain details of local management. I will not enlarge on the question as to whether the selection of the sites should be left to the Borough Councils; but so far as the appointment of the teachers is concerned I am disposed to think that the Borough Councils should have the appointment of the assistant teachers and that the appointment of the head teachers should be with the London County Council, or that the County Council should send down a list of candidates to the Borough Councils which should decide which one of three or four on the list should be elected. That would have the advantage of preventing the growth in each locality of an exclusive staff of teachers, deprived of the advantages of interchange of appointments with other parts of the Metropolis and the country But, as I have said, I am entirely in accord with the general principles of the Bill. I approve of the general central authority which it proposes for London education being the London County Council, and I desire that that general authority should delegate its powers in the direction I have suggested. For these reasons I have not the least hesitation in giving my support to the Second Reading.

*MR, HARRY SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I have been somewhat astonished at the extreme divergence of opinion which has been expressed by hon. Members who have spoken in regard to the whole of this Bill. I am going to endeavour to prove that the inclusion of representatives of the Borough Councils on the Educational Authority for London is the only just and reasonable conclusion to which the Government could arrive. One would have imagined, from some of the speeches of hon. Members, that the citizens of the Capital of this country were absolutely incapable of dealing properly and fairly with the great question of education. What still more strikes me is the fact that the provincial Press and provincial Members consider that the citizens in the provinces are capable of dealing with education. [DR. MACNAMARA: —"Hear, hear."] I am glad to hear that cheer from the hon. Member for Camberwell. Now I take it there are two principles actuating the Government in bringing forward the present Bill. The first is that there should be one authority for all forms of education, and the second that the one authority should be a municipal authority. I do not agree with the hon. Member for Poplar, who said there is only one principle, and that is, that there should be only one authority. The Government have endeavoured to thoroughly grapple with this question of municipalisation, and the endeavour to exclude Borough Councils seems to have fallen to the ground. I think that London's Borough Councils are absolutely entitled to be placed on the education authority. Under the Act of 1902 a County Council or a County Borough is created the education authority for its own area. What is a county borough? The county boroughs are all boroughs having a population of over 50,000, and some others are included without that population because they happen to be ancient cities. I believe there is only one borough in London that has a smaller population than 50,000, and when you come to the question of age the City of London and the City of Westminster can vie with any cities as to length of existence. One might fairly advance the argument, without fear of contradiction, that there would be some claim to consider that those large boroughs which are equal to county boroughs in size and importance might be the educational authority for their own area and district, but I grant at once there is an objection, namely, that there must be one rate for the whole of London, and in addition you must have one fixed scale for the salaries of the elementary teachers. The County Council is undoubtedly the only authority that is entitled to make a rate for the whole of London, but it does not follow that it is the only rating authority, or that it is the rating authority at all. It is the only County Council in the whole country that does not make and collect the county rate. The Borough Councils rate themselves in their own districts for their own wants, and, moreover, when the County Council requires money for any purpose it sends a precept down to the Borough Councils and they collect the money. School Boards and Boards of Guardians do the same thing, so that really and truly the despised Borough Councils are the rating authorities for the whole of London. And yet the hon. Gentleman wishes to exclude them altogether from having any part in the educational authority for London. If the Borough Councils are not to be considered as County Borough Councils, then in what other way are they to act? The Act of 1902 says all Borough Councils with a population of more than 10,000 shall be the local education authority for elementary education, and what is proposed in the Bill of the Government? It is proposed that the Borough Councils shall be the managers, shall have the choice of sites and the appointment of teachers. But mark the difference in the case of the country, where the boroughs are to have the power of finance. I have been a manager and can assert that the powers I had were absolutely nil. I believe if a new handle was wanted to a door the managers were perfectly powerless to put one on without first obtaining the consent of the central authority. The hon. Member for Poplar said we cannot allow the Borough Councils to take the position of the county boroughs. The Government should follow the precedent of the 1902 Bill, and if the Borough Councils are deprived of their financial rights you must put them on the central authority. The Borough Councils of London must be one of two things. They must either come in as the educational authority for the whole of London or be the ordinary Borough Council and have the powers conferred by the Act of 1902. It would be ridiculous to create Metropolitan Boroughs and then deprive them of the whole of their rights.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. HARRY SAMUEL: In the remarks I have ventured to make to the House, I have endeavoured to prove that London Borough Councils must be placed either on an equality of power with the county boroughs, or, if that position is denied them, they must at least be the local education authority and have power over the education of their own areas. The Opposition, who have criticised the London Borough Council, must be asked to decide one way or the other. It seems to me that hon. Members who oppose the Government in this matter have the greatest possible pleasure in belittling the whole system of London government that has been set up for the capital of the country. I have endeavoured to prove that justice must be dealt out to the Borough Councils of London in this matter. I go further—I say the members of the Borough Councils are the most natural representatives for this purpose of any single popularly-elected body. They are, first of all, the best judges of sites, for the simple reason that I have always found that the School Board, whenever they have endeavoured to find sites for board schools, have always come into conflict with the local authority, and I have always found that the site selected by the local authority was the better. I have the honour to represent a constituency in East London where the poor have to keep the poor; that is a principle I do not defend and am not here to defend. I think it is a wrong principle; but if you take a valuable site in a district like that which is highly rated you necessarily add considerably to the rates per head of the district. That is why I think the London County Council should be the authority for the whole of London education, because it is impossible for us to allow the principle with regard to education of the poor having to keep the poor in any section of the Metropolis. That is one fault of the School Board. Up to the present moment they have totally disregarded the recommendations of the local authorities, and dumped their schools down anywhere they chose without any regard to the wishes of the districts. With regard to the teachers I am one of those who would like to pay a very high compliment to the integrity, honesty of purpose, and deep devotion of the whole of the School Board teachers to the work of education. As a manager of a Board school in the East of London, I have taken the opportunity to pay many and frequent visits to the Board schools of my districts, and I have found at all times that the teachers have done all in their power to maintain the high standard of education in every school. They have given all their time and all their intellect ungrudgingly to the work of improving the minds of the children of the district, and under any educational authority at which we may arrive I certainly trust that the teachers will not imagine that we shall lose sight of their devotion and the integrity of purpose they have given to the profession which they adorn. I am certain that the teachers will always find that their suggestions will be absolutely and justly considered by every responsible body. Their qualifications are well known, and I have the greatest pleasure in paying this small tribute to their great work.

In dealing with the difficult problem of London Education I have arrived at the conclusion that it is one of great complexity. There are two authorities which have power over the whole of the London districts—the London County Council is one, and the London Borough Councils, which have been created in addition, the other Now I would like to insist on this one thing—that both these powers are indispensable to the constitution of London, and while they overlap to a certain extent the Government, in solving this problem, as I think justly, have arrived at the conclusion that both must be constituted the educational authority for London. The London County Council is the only body that has the power to make a rate over the whole of London, and I have no objection whatever to the number of the representatives of that body being increased on the Board. Under the Bill we have placed upon them, the responsibility of the education of London as a whole, and if the education is not carried out throughout London in the way in which it should be, then the responsibility will fall upon them, and the electors of London will demand at their hands a recognition of the way in which the work has been done. That being so it would ill become us to deny to the representatives of the London County Council the power they ought to have, and I do not see why we should not give them the control, at least numerically, in this matter. It is always possible to formulate the alterations which can be made to a Bill in Committee, but I wish, on this occasion, to confine myself as far as I possibly can to the principle underlying the Bill, and I certainly think that the London County Council should have a numerical majority, but at the same time I have contended, and I hope successfully, that it would be an injustice of the worst kind to deny representation to the London Boroughs as well.

With regard to the *ad hoc* authority. I have the greatest objection to it; in my opinion it has not been the success which hon. Members claim for it. In the first place, I contend that the School Board does not represent the electors of London. I have in my hand certain figures, which have been compiled with regard to this matter, and I agree with the figures given by the Secretary to the Board of Education, and also those given by the hon. Member for Camberwell, and I think they have come to a very fair conclusion as to the number of electors the School Board represents. Fifty-five members of the present School Board have been elected, thirteen of whom have resigned and one has died, consequently 25 per cent., or a quarter of the present School Board, have never been elected at all. I would also point out that not more than 21 per cent. of the electors voted at the last election, and under those circumstances no member of the School Board can represent that he is responsible for more than 16 per cent. of the electors, but if you deduct from that the one quarter of the School Board which has since been co-opted you come to this, that when you have polled every vote given by the electorate no member represents more than 12·88 of the electors. Now certain Members have contended that the reason that the electors do not go to the poll in these matters is because of multiplicity of elections. That is what we, on this side, have always said, and what we want is to do everything we can to make the electors of London take a deep and vital interest in what, in my opinion, is the most important question that exists, namely, the education of the Metropolis. Yet you want to deny to the metropolitan boroughs what you give to the humblest boroughs in the country. I hope that I have contended successfully that it is only right and proper to give to the London boroughs the representation that is their due, and I trust that the Government will not follow the example that has been set in this matter by the hon. Member for Poplar, but, having created the Borough Councils, and having foreshadowed that they would clothe them with greater powers in the future, they will now give them that representation to which they are entitled in the control of education for London.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I do not desire to follow the hon. Member at length into his statistics, but I would say in passing that the argument he has used is a peculiarly dangerous one. He says because many of the London electors did not go to the poll that therefore the London School Board is not a representative body, but, if that argument is carried to its logical conclusion, the hon. Member himself only represents a minority of the electors of the constituency which he has the honour to represent in this House, because less than 40 per cent. of the electors voted for him.

*MR. HARRY SAMUEL: No, Sir; 75 per cent. of the electors polled their vote.

*MR. EMMOTT: Less than 40 per cent., I say, voted for him, but I will not pursue the matter; it is of no consequence.

*MR. HARRY SAMUEL: I beg your pardon, it is of the greatest consequence to me.

*MR. EMMOTT: As I am challenged, I would say that the total electorate of the Division which the hon. Member honours by representing is 6,800, and that the total number who voted for the hon. Member is 2,600. I am not putting it forward as an argument against the hon. Member being a fair representative for his Division; I merely use it to carry his peculiarly dangerous argument a little further than he appeared to be inclined to do. The hon. Member has made a strong appeal in regard to the position of the Borough Councils under this Bill, and I should like to try and disabuse his mind of the fact that by anyone on this side of the House the Borough Councils are condemned or despised; the real facts of the case are rather the other way. We have a fear on this side, which I think is justified to a very great extent, that Members on the other side of the House have an unreasonable objection to, and suspicion of, the London County Council. We may be wrong, but naturally, in matters of this kind, when one holds that view, it must affect one's position. I entirely agree that the Borough Councils of London are sufficiently large to become separate educational entities, but, inasmuch as the hon. Member has acknowledged that you must have one rating authority for education in London, it is quite impossible that the Borough Councils should be complete authorities. That being so, the hon. Member has confined himself to making a fervid appeal to the Government to retain the powers of the Borough Councils as foreshadowed in the Bill. There is one fundamental objection to that, which is that you cannot give these powers to the Borough Councils and retain the authority of the London County Council. You cannot serve two masters in this matter, and if you are to set the power of the purse against the power of management in the selection of teachers and sites, there must necessarily at the outset be a great deal of friction, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education will have to do a great deal in the way of arbitration. But there is another objection. The hon. Member has compared Borough Councils with minor authorities under County Councils in the country, but the representation of those authorities for education under the County Councils is four to two. This proposes to give the entire management to the Borough Councils, and his analogy falls to the ground. More than that, I attach the greatest importance to the question dealt with by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Haddingtonshire and the right hon. Member for Cambridge University, namely, the continuity of management. You cannot hand over these schools to the Borough Councils and retain that continuity of management which is so desirable if the system is to work without friction. There is another thing, if you hand the management of these schools over to the Borough Councils you practically exclude women from the share they have taken in the past. The hon. Member said the Borough Councils were the more suitable people to select sites for schools, but from the little experience I have had of cases where there has been a controversy between the School Board and the local authority, I have found the School Board has made a much wiser choice with regard to sites than the local authority has done. If it is left to the Borough Councils, parochialism must enter far too much into the choice of teachers, and, that being so, it is perfectly evident that the choice of teachers ought to be left in the hands of the larger authority and not in the hands of the Borough Councils.

An extraordinary view has been put forward by the Government as to what the House should vote for in voting for or against the Second Reading of the Bill. The Colonial Secretary said recently that all we were concerned for in such a case was the main principle. That idea is going to carry us a long way. Occasionally, on a Friday, we have an opportunity to introduce Bills into this House on such matters as the taxation of land values, or temperance reform. Then we are told by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite that these are matters which cannot be dealt with except by the Government, and only then after having regard to all the questions involved, and that we have not only to consider the principle but also all these matters surrounding the Bill. It seems to me that if the authority of the Colonial Secretary's statement is to maintain in this House that, then hon. Members would have to vote for every wild-cat scheme that might be introduced, if they agreed with the principle, quite independent of the fact of whether it was a workable scheme or not. It seems to me that what we ought to consider in deciding to vote for or against this scheme is this: whether the scheme proposed by this Bill will give us a better Education Board than we at present possess, and in answering that question one must say whether this scheme is better than others which could be produced. We are faced by the fact that the scheme of this Bill has been abandoned. We do not know where we are. We do not know what Amendments the Government is going to accept, and until we know that, and what the scheme is likely to give us, we cannot say if this is a scheme which should be voted on or not. The scheme must be greatly altered in detail, and when it is altered and the Government have intimated the Amendments to which they will agree, I do not see what will be left of the Bill except the first clause. Every other clause will be so altered as to make the Bill totally unrecognisable. Vague promises made by the Government to us are of no use in this matter; we want to know more exactly than we have been told the alterations which the Government are going to accept, and I do not think the House ought to give a Second Reading to this Bill until they know what the Government is going to do. In my opinion the Government is playing with the House. We are not being treated fairly. This scheme depends as much on detail as on principle, and although one cannot expect the Government to say exactly what they intend to do in an entirely new scheme, I hold we ought to know in outline and know what the Government are going to accept before we are asked to give a vote on the Second Reading. We want to know: is the Council to be a real authority, is it going to make the scheme for the Committee of managers by itself, or is that scheme to be subject to the approval of the Education Board? Are the Borough Councils to be kept out, or are they to be represented on the Committees, and are they to carry on the management of the schools? We also want to know, with regard to the question of women, how many there are going to be on the Committee, and how many are going to be retained in the management of those schools in which they have taken so great a part in the past. We don't ask for the exact number, but we want a good deal more information than we have had, and it is only fair it should be given to us. We want that information the more because of the extraordinary hurry with which that Second Reading is being passed through. As regards Parliamentary time, the First and Second Reading have come almost together. No time has been given to consider the matter, and until we have these particulars from the Government, we can only deal with the Bill as drawn. As it is drawn, it seems to me a very bad measure; we are told that the principle is municipalisation. There is much to be said in favour of that, and much to be said against it. There is the argument that if you have a body for all purposes, you get a stronger body and better men on it. There is the argument that has been used that you cannot have *ad hoc* bodies for every purpose, that you must elect men to deal with a large number of subjects, and you must not leave education out; that you must not elect for educational purposes, and nothing else, just as hon. Members sent here represent their constituencies on all subjects, including those they do understand and those they do not. Against this it may be urged education is a special subject, and there are men and women who are willing to go on an authority dealing with education, but are not willing to go on a body dealing with all purposes. There is also a great danger, especially in a great city like London, of your overworking the municipal authorities.

Now the Government have taken a most extraordinary course with regard to municipalisation. At the present time they are considering whether the power of municipalities ought not to be curtailed with regard to some of the functions they have taken upon themselves, and, on the other hand, they are throwing upon their shoulders the burden of the education of the great mass of the people. The municipalities of London say we do not want it. Mr. Beechcroft's Amendment, I am told to-day, was rejected by the County Councils by eighty to twenty-three, and Mr. Beechcroft's resolution was in support of the principle of this Bill. Therefore you say to the London County Council "You must take control of this education." You do not want to have any School Board and it is for that reason you are forcing this Bill through the House. It is a strange thing that the Government should desire to destroy a great body like the School Board, which has done such great work, and to give the work they have done to a new and untried body. That, instead of being Conservatism, seems to me Radicalism *in excelsis.* I am justified in making these remarks, not so much with regard to London as to other great towns which I know. It would have been much wiser to have given them an opportunity of keeping their School Boards if they chose. In the Act of last year, we made, I am afraid, a great mistake, and I am afraid we are going to do the same in this Bill this year. We are making a great leap in the dark. Some hon. Members say the technical education committee of London has been a great success. I agree, although I think that success has been a little exaggerated. I think the problem they have to deal with, and the amount of work they have to perform, is a small matter to that which will be thrown upon them under this Bill. We are throwing too much work upon the municipalities without regard to their wishes or capacities. We shall have to deal in the future with the way in which municipal work will have to be regulated—whether it shall be regulated, as Parliamentary work is regulated, by setting up a sort of municipal cabinet to control it, and have the work carried out by paid servants under the authority of the municipal cabinet. If something of that sort is not done, I am afraid, with the work we are throwing on it, that the municipality will break down and some serious muddle will occur with regard to carrying on municipal enterprise. In conclusion, I would say, granted that *ad hoc* election is impossible, and granted that municipalisation is the remedy, I maintain that this scheme is absolutely wrong. I am perfectly aware that our peculiar English character believes much in compromise, and in that way schemes illogical and absurd in themselves are carried out, but I say at the same time this scheme cannot and will not work. There is friction in every line of it. If the minority only of the members of the Committee are to be members of the London County Council, I hope the House faces this fact, that the London County Council, in nominating the authority, will have to depart from the wise system of proportional party representation it has adopted hitherto. The financial control given under this Bill is illusory. How can it work? The minority appointed by the London County Council may be overwhelmed. The London County Council immediately say "We will stop supplies," and the Board of Education has to step in. A system which can be broken down and crippled in that way this House ought never to consent to.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): As the hon. Member, as I understand, is opposed to the *ad hoc* authority——

MR. EMMOTT: I should prefer to keep it in London, and with regard to municipalisation I think we should have gone more slowly.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: He thinks we should have gone more slowly. He is also against the Borough Councils, and does not want the London County Council, because he says it is forcing on them something they do not want. Under these circumstances I do not know what authority he would put in the place of that the Government proposes. One of the main objections which have been put forward to the Bill is that it has been brought forward too hurriedly. Now the First Reading was taken on the 6th of April, and the Second Reading is being taken on the 28th; that is surely not too short a time for the London County Council to discuss and master the details of the Bill. But I may point out that alterations in a Bill do not take place on Second Reading, but in the Committee stage, and I do not believe that will be entered into for another week or ten days, and there will be plenty of time to move Amendments when we get to the Committee stage.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Islington said the free churches were going to suffer because of the suspension of the School Board for London, and that the result of this scheme would be to largely endow the Church of England; but I do not see why the London County Council and the Borough County Council should favour the Church any more than the School Board has done. If any change takes place I should think the London County Council would be even more against the clergy than the School Board. I remember a time when the clergy had great influence over the School Board, but I have never heard of their having much influence on the County Council. Then the hon. Gentleman who just has sat down seemed to quarrel with the Government because it had been said that on the Second Reading of a Bill one voted for the principle and not for details. I have been here in the House nearly eleven years and I have endeavoured to devote as much time as I could to the details of the business of the House, and I have always understood that on the Second Reading of a Bill the only thing that has to be considered is the principle. It is on that understanding that I intend to vote for this Bill. I have never had reason from my place to advocate the cause of the London County Council. When they are in the right I am their supporter, but when they are in the wrong I am their opponent. My action against the London County Council has not been due to any prejudice on my part. I believe on the particular occasions to which I refer they have been misled. I intend to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill because I admit that the principle involved in the Bill should be one authority. I agree with the principle, but I do not agree with the details of the Bill, because I think the London County Council, though nominally constituted as the authority, is, as a matter of fact, not the authority; and I hope in the Committee stage right hon. Gentlemen below me will encourage Amendments which may be moved with the object of giving more effective control to the London County Council. Whatever the authority is to be under this Bill it should be an effective authority. I do not believe in constituting an authority, and then taking away all its powers. I think that the County Council should be the authority, and that if a rating authority has the power to levy a rate that authority should be elected by the people who pay the rate. The County Council levies a rate all over London, and is the only authority which should be chosen under the Bill.

Then, again, the Council has done good work whenever it has taken up the subject of education. I believe that no one will contend that the Council has done badly as regards education; and, therefore, it has a right to be chosen as the authority for education in London. My hon. friend the Member for Hampstead said that if the Borough Councils were eliminated it would be a slight upon them. I do not wish to do anything that might be considered a slight on the Borough Councils, but, in this particular instance, I do not think that they are the proper authorities. The Borough Councils were not created to be an educational authority, but to carry out other very important and useful work, and it would be no slight on them not to be chosen as the education authorities. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Haddington made, if I may be allowed to say so, an extremely eloquent and able speech on the subject. I am not able to follow him into the intricacies of the education question, but I should like to say that I hope that the Government, besides making the London County Council the paramount authority, will endeavour in some way to arrange that the co-opted member shall be co-opted under some scheme to be arranged with the approval of the Board of Education. I would leave the Borough Councils to be the managers under that scheme; but I think something such as I have suggested would go far to remove the difficulty in connection with the Bill. It would be practically on the lines of the Bill of last year; and we give London an education authority for which it has a right to ask.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has referred in a spirit of doubt, which I think is largely shared on this side of the House as well as on the other, to the advisability of extending powers under the Bill to the Borough Councils; and he seems to desire to make the London County Council not only the paramount authority over the Borough Councils, but to place it in the position of being a real education authority, as other County Councils were placed under the Act of last year. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman is aware of the opinion expressed at a meeting of the London County Council this afternoon. After all, the London County Council are the best judges of their own business. They are a singularly businesslike and competent body. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster interrupted my hon. friend the Member for North Camberwell, and said that the resolution which was to be proposed at the meeting of the County Council was not a resolution demanding an *ad hoc* authority. The resolution which was passed is in this form:—

> "That this Council is strongly opposed to the scheme proposed by the Bill, and would prefer either the maintenance of the present system or the creation of one directly-elected education authority which should have real and complete control over all grades of education."

The following words were afterwards added:—

> "And to devote itself exclusively to educational purposes."

I do not think that after that resolution it can be contended that we are any longer in the dark as to the opinion of the Parliament of this great Metropolis, the London County Council, as to what ought to be done under this Bill. I make no disguise of my attitude. I approach this Bill in the same spirit that I approached the Bill of last year. I opposed the Bill of last year because it divorced education from popular control, and imposed on the people the duty of supplying funds for sectarian teaching. With regard to this Bill, I say that if these arguments had any force with regard to the Bill of last year, they have ten times more force with regard to this Bill. To destroy the London School Board is a much more serious act of destruction than to destroy the other School Boards of this country; and the endowment of religion, and the fortifying of the sacerdotal spirit in directing the lives and the future of the children is a much more serious question in London, where many of the churches and church schools are, to my knowledge, far more under the influence of extremists than are churches and church schools in the country. Romish doctrines are being inculcated in every possible way in the children; and it is far more serious to endow sacerdotalism with new resources in London than in the country. This Bill seems to be the worst of all possible measures for dealing with the problem of education in London. When the principle of the democratic control of popular education was endorsed in the Act of 1870, the triumph in London was the greatest of all. Look at the difference between districts in London at that time, and the same districts now, with their splendidly equipped Board schools—centres of light and culture and refinement for the children of the poor. They are magnificent monuments to the principle of the democratic control of education.

Then again the London County Council itself is a splendid monument of municipal unification, and a broad conception of municipal duty, which has been evolved, not from small local bodies without any special unity, but from this great body of representatives gathered together from all parts of London. Both the London School Board and the London County Council are themselves the strongest arguments in favour of an *ad hoc* directly-elected authority as the omnipotent education authority in London. The Act of last year attempted, I will not say dishonestly, but deceptively, to set up a single education authority in the counties and great boroughs of England and Wales. But in regard to this Bill, which openly sets aside the principle of a single authority, you propose to give nominally administrative and financial control to the London County Council; but it is not real control, because you do not give a majority to the London County Council. There have been adumbrations of a possible reconstruction of this Bill from the back Benches opposite; and it was also alluded to in a rather indefinite manner by the First Lord of the Treasury; but there has been no reconstruction as yet which would justify us in saying that the Bill does not propose a purely nominal administrative and financial control to be given to the London County Council—a control which is to be at once taken away because the Council is to be denied a majority on its own Committee.

Major JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to call attention to the fact that forty members are not present.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not satisfied that forty members are not present.

Mr. CHANNING: Further, the London County Council is not to be left free, as other councils are, to fix the limits of delegation of powers to the Borough Councils; and it is not to be free to regulate local expenditure, except as regards the question of sites. The third clause practically gives a very large number of indefinite powers to the Borough Councils. If any question arises as to whether the point in question is a detail of administration or management which belongs to the Borough Council or not that point is not to be decided by the supreme authority of the County Council, but is to be referred to the Board of Education. This Bill sets the Borough and County Councils fighting together, with the Board of Education as a sort of umpire. We all know that the school managers have taken an earnest interest in educational matters, and we ought to continue to trust them with the management of the schools. The hon. Member for Hampstead said the Borough Councils were infants whom they ought to instruct in respect to these tremendous obligations to be placed upon them. I think it is a monstrous thing to ask these "baby councils" to undertake the management of all the schools of London and entrust them with the future of the many children of this great Metropolis. The First Lord of the Treasury has stated that it is absolutely necessary to have a unity of rating throughout the metropolitan area. I agree with that, but why are we not to have a unity of administration as well? The London County Council, by its resolution to-day, shows that it is so overworked that, far from taking up other duties, it is anxious to transfer to a directly representative body elected for educational purposes the educational duties which it now carries out with regard to technical education.

We have heard frequently of the multiplicity of elections and the sparseness of the polls. Naturally people do not like their business life disturbed by elections for two or three months together. It might be true that the number of electors who go to the poll is very small, but what is the real reason why hon. Members opposite are so hostile to the County Council and the School Board? Is it because of the smallness of votes? No, it is because those votes, whether given for the County Council or the School Board, manage in the long run to return a progressive majority. Supposing it is true that 25 per cent. only record their votes for the County Council and School Board elections, and 75 per cent. abstain from voting—why do they abstain? We know the artifices and appeals which have been made by the Unionist Party again and again with regard to School Board questions and County Council elections, but those appeals have been rejected and refused again and again by the people of London, and why? Because the greater portion of the electors have made up their mind that the business of the London School Board and the London County Council has been well and wisely conducted in the best interest of the Metropolis, and therefore they have not been able to whip up this 75 per cent. The question of the multiplicity of elections is a very serious one, and really in this matter right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite would do well to study the example afforded by the United States upon this subject. My hon. friend the Member for North Camberwell suggested that we might have the School Board elected in single electoral districts like the County Council, and at the same time and on the same ballot paper as the London County Council. That is the method adopted in every one of the American elections, and it is an immense saving of time, trouble, and expense. This arrangement completely avoids all those difficulties which seem to be such stumbling blocks to many hon. Members on both sides of the House.

What is the real solid objection which members of the Conservative Party, and some hon. Members on the Opposition side, have raised continually against the London School Board? It is that the School Board is elected for educational purposes, and that it is not a rate-making body. But it makes a precept, and imposes its will upon the rating authority, and its precept cannot be set aside by the rating authority. There is another case in which the example of the great American cities might be followed. In America they have a single education authority elected by the people. It is an *ad hoc* authority, but it has not the right to impose its own financial obligations upon the rating authority of that district. Under the American system men and women give their lives wholly to one class of duty, and they are not members of the municipal body at all. They draw up their plans and suggestions, but the finance remains absolutely under the control of the City Council, or whatever the paramount financial body may be. I have raised as one of my principal objections to this Bill the conflict between the jurisdiction of the power of the Borough Councils and the County Councils. I do not quite understand the figures furnished by the hon. Member for Islington as to the grant in aid which may be given to London under this Bill. Under Clause 3 of this Bill you are creating twenty-nine new bodies which can impose a precept upon the London County Council, and, as far as I can understand the Bill, the London County Council will not be able to resist the precepts and expenditure imposed upon them by the various Borough Councils.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Certainly they will.

MR. CHANNING: That is the effect of the Clause, as I understand it. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is the other way about.] I should welcome any assurance that we shall not have an immense increase of London rates under this Bill. The Borough Councils are to test the qualifications of the teachers, and they are to appoint surveyors to examine sites and appoint officers to carry out the various duties which are given to them somewhat indefinitely under this Bill. If the Board of Education is favourable to Borough Councils, Clause 3 is very elastic, and their power to increase the rates may be very much multiplied. Both administratively and financially this Bill is unworkable and prejudicial to the interests of London. The problem of dealing with nearly 1,000,000 children demands an authority capable of devoting all its energies, and the efforts of the best men and women you can find in London, to this work of educating the children; and to call upon a Borough or County Council to treat this as a mere light and unimportant extra addendum to its agenda is simply playing with the educational interests of this great metropolis. I shall be glad if before the Second Reading we have some assurance of the complete recasting of this Bill, both in its principles as well as its details, but if the measure is not thoroughly re-cast I shall give it my most strenuous opposition.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.), who was indistinctly heard, said: This Bill does not please anybody, not even the Government. Even at this early stage the Prime Minister has hinted, not vaguely, that he will be prepared to amend it, which looked like banning his own Bill, playing the *rôle* of the devil's advocate. In the very few remarks I shall offer I shall confine myself almost entirely to the authority and its creation. Everything we objected to, some of us strongly and passionately, in the Bill of last year, reappears in the present measure, with an authority so astonishing that it appears frankly to have surprised the Prime Minister himself, who is prepared to run away from it. The farther the right hon. Gentleman runs away from it the better. The Bill as it stands is an impossible Bill. I do not think it can be carried without the assistance of the Irish Members who helped to carry the wear-and-tear Bill of last session.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Why not send us back to Dublin?

MR. MIDDLEMORE: There will be twenty-nine authorities created under this Bill. I should like to say a very few words in criticism of these new authorities and also to add a few words of regret in regard to the extinction of the School Board. Under this measure the County Councils will have to pay the bill. I think that is clear.

MR. WALTER LONG: No; it will supply the money.

MR. MIDDLEMORE: The County Council will have to pay the bill and to control, or try to control, the education of London through this new many-headed authority with which, I suspect, the County Council will have little or no connection. The Borough Council committees are to manage the schools, select the sites, and employ and dismiss the teachers. Now, where does the control of the County Council come in? You transfer to these Borough Councils all that is vital and essential, and then you say the County Council has the control. I respectfully submit that that is not so. If you deprive your authority of the power of initiation and of the power of selecting sites, and appointing and dismissing teachers, you make the County Council a subordinate authority at once as far as these all-important duties are concerned. The Bill attempts to establish a dual control and fails, and it establishes control by twenty-nine bodies, which it calls, most incorrectly, subordinate bodies. If the County Council has one spark of self-respect it will not accept the duties which the House is invited to impose upon it, and, if they take that course, I do not think there is any power on earth to compel them to take up those duties. This Bill does not allow the County Council to make its own scheme, and in this respect you treat it worse than any borough in the country that has 10,000 inhabitants. The Government even places them in a minority on their own Committee, and makes their authority a sham and insincere one, and ineffective because it is deprived of all control. The right hon. Gentleman said that this is a Bill to destroy the School Board. Why should the School Board be destroyed? The Prime Minister belauds it and says that, though it has many enemies, he is not one of them. But the right hon. Gentleman is doing an enemy's part. Can hostility go further than destruction of the School Board? When the right hon. Gentleman says the Board has conferred immense obligations on children and parents, and then proceeds to recompense the Board with loss of life, I am reminded of the Walrus and the Carpenter, weeping over the oysters before eating them. I should have thought that the proper course to have taken would have been to extend the operations of the School Board and confer fresh powers upon them. The right hon. Gentleman gave certain reasons for destroying the

School Board, but they were not equal to the occasion. The right hon. Gentleman says *ad hoc* authority is extravagant, but I do not believe that the London School Board has been more extravagant than the great Municipal Councils of the country, which have been piling up debt in a way to jeopardise their credit. But I must add that for the present Government to pose as the apostles of economy is a spectacle that "staggers humanity."

The right hon. Gentleman said further that the work was over-centralised. I do not believe it. The School Board has decentralised its work as occasion required; it has appointed Committees, Sub-committees, 250 groups of managers, and 2,000 individual managers. What could they do more? Could these fresh bodies decentralise or depute better? I believe the right hon. Gentleman wants, not to decentralise, but to dethrone. He wants to take the crown from the School Board, break it into thirty pieces, and distribute the pieces among local authorities, giving the most insignificant piece of all to the County Council. The electors do not go to the poll in sufficient numbers for the right hon. Gentleman. According to his scheme they will not go to the poll at all. Clearly he will make bad worse in that respect. As far as they do go to the poll it is a great gain to education. I do not know what are the real grounds for destroying the School Board. He seemed to praise the Board on educational grounds, but I am afraid he is going to destroy it on non-educational grounds. I am told that the influence of the teachers on elections is a matter that lies very heavily on the conscience of some of my hon. friends. The chief influence of the teacher is in the schoolroom, and there these elementary teachers are the greatest force we have for forming the character of the future citizens of London. For my part I would do everything possible to encourage their interference in elections; I am glad to see them anywhere, and I would do anything I could to improve their status. The only reason for destroying the School Board is, in my opinion, that they have done badly for the children of London. The reverse is the case. The parents are under immense obligations to them. I say ,therefore, that the Bill is radically bad, because, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own showing, it is going to destroy what is radically good. The right hon. Gentleman had an almost supreme opportunity of re-organising the education of London—the almost Imperial task of taking the first educational step towards bringing the Empire closer together, but I am afraid there is only one man in the Ministry who can see and seize a great Imperial task. The Government have missed a great educational opportunity, and, what is more, I believe they are doing a very ill turn to upwards of 1,000,000 children in London.

*Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): Not only has the Borough Council in my constituency protested, I believe unanimously, against the passing of this Bill, but throughout the constituency, as far as I am aware, there has not been a single voice raised in support of the proposals of the Government. I have had a long experience on the subject of education. At the time Mr. Forster was preparing his Bill I was one of a large deputation of working men who waited on that statesman urging him to make the Bill a popular measure. I say popular not because the masses of the people were wanting in sympathy with education, but because the proposal as originally drafted was to do what this Bill proposes—to give to the local authorities the power to control the educational destinies of London. The deputation wrestled with Mr. Forster for some time on the subject, and ultimately he frankly admitted that they had convinced him as to the desirability of the authority being directly elected by the ratepayers, and the result was the establishment of the London School Board. There was then in London, a large organisation of working men, called the Auxiliary of the National Education League, and a very angry controversy ensued between the supporters and the opponents of a national scheme of education as to the kind of religious teaching to be given in the board schools. It was due to the working men to whom I have referred, and to Mr. Spurgeon, who presided over a great meeting of that body in Exeter Hall, that the compromise ultimately agreed to was first suggested. At the first election for the School Board I was a candidate having for my colleague Professor Huxley, and we took an active part in endeavouring to give effect to the Act. At subsequent elections also I did the best I could to assist the cause of education, in which, during all my life, I have taken a very deep interest. For twelve years I was a member of the School Attendance Committee of the old Borough of Marylebone, so I think I may say without egotism that I have some practical acquaintance with the work of the School Board, and I have no hesitation in saying that it has accomplish a splendid work, the full benefits of whch we have not yet lived to see. The present generation has derived enormous advantage from that work, and even the Prime Minister is compelled to bear testimony to its excellence, although he has forgotten to tell us why he proposes to annihilate the body which has done that wonderful work. I mention these matters simply to show that I may claim to speak with some practical acquaintance of the subject under discussion.

Notwithstanding the small percentage of the electorate which has from time to time gone to the poll, I believe that the great work which has been accomplished is largely due to the democratic basis on which the Board was established, and I cannot help thinking that that is one of the crimes it has committed, and one of the reasons its dissolution is to be precipitated. I hope I am wrong in that view, but if the School Board has done such magnificent work for London why is it to be abolished? That is the question my constituents are asking. It has been asked in this House, but no satisfactory answer has been vouchsafed. What demand has been made, and from whence has that demand come, for the abolition of the School Board? There has not been a single meeting in the Metropolis, or a single petition presented to this House, or the slightest feeling exhibited anywhere, except in clerical quarters, for the abolition of the School Board. We have, therefore, to seek for reasons which do not appear on the surface, and I do not think it is very difficult to ascertain what those reasons are. It is easy to account for the small percentage of the electorate who have voted at the School Board elections. The masses of the people had been so confident that nobody would be found so wicked as to stop the cause of educational progress that they did not trouble to go to the poll. Ever since the Board was established the clerical party have from time to time made efforts to stop the educational clock, and on one occasion they did manage to "capture the School Board," and to retain the control for three years. It has been said that the masses of the people were indifferent to the cause of education. It was not indifference, but over-confidence, that lost that election, and when the next opportunity came round there was an uprising throughout London, with the result that the clerical party were swept from power, and they have never regained the position they then lost. That is the real reason the School Board is now to be abolished. Because it is clear that the ratepayers will not tolerate the Board being governed, and the educational destinies of London being controlled, by a clerical majority, that authority is to be swept away. It was not indifference on the part of the ratepayers of London that led to the catastrophe but it was over-confidence, and ever since they have been doing their best, except at the last election of the School Board, to prevent the clerical party from regaining the ascendancy it once occupied on the School Board. When the election took place in 1900 the country was suffering from the delirium of the war fever, and if I wanted any evidence that war has a demoralising effect on the people I should find it in the fact that the people of London in that year forgot their duties. They were "Mafficking" in the streets instead of going to the poll to record their votes but they have bitterly repented themselves. You will have plenty of evidence accumulated before long that will convince you that I am right. The General Election of 1900 overshadowed the elections for the Borough Councils and the School Board which followed. When the election for the School Board of London took place the electors were absolutely surfeited with elections. Those facts were quite sufficient to explain the small percentage of electors who went to the poll at the School Board election. So far as I am able to judge this Bill is going to result, for some time, in chaos.

During the past thirty years splendid work has been done for education in London through the machinery set up by the School Board, whose members have devoted themselves assiduously to the work without fee or reward. Now you are going to summarily dismiss the body which has done that splendid work and put all the efficient costly machinery into the melting pot. You will have to begin all over again with a new authority. Why should we begin all over again? I ask the Parliamentary Secretary in all sincerity if he will tell us what crime the School Board has committed that it should be annihilated? I cannot help thinking that it is because the clerical party that are behind the Government failed to permanently capture the School Board of London, as they were advised to do some time ago by a very high authority. If it had not been for that influence I feel strongly that the School Board would have been allowed to continue its work. The new authority which is to be set up against the wish of the London County Council is to be an educational authority but only in name. Everybody in the House has from time to time noted the sturdy opposition which the hon. Member for Peckham has given to any proposals of the London County Council. He never loses an opportunity of pitching into that body and saying the most unpleasant things about it. But he now tells us that he is in favour of the work of education being undertaken by the London County Council. Does he wish to popularise a body which, ever since it was established, he has been doing his best to denounce and belittle? Nothing of the kind. Everybody knows that a taxing body is always unpopular. People do not inquire into the reasons which induce a body to impose taxes, and, supposing that this Bill passes, as it unfortunately will, every ratepayer will know that the demand for the school tax, which there is too much reason to fear will be increased, comes from the London County Council. The County Council will not have its opularity increased by that fact. On the contrary it will afford the hon. Member for Peckham, and others who view the County Council in this unfavourable light, to say, "Oh, yes, these new taxes for educational purposes are being imposed by the wicked County Council." It will assist them in their persistent efforts to make that body unpopular. There are many more reasons which could be stated in opposition to the Bill, but I have stated the sentiments that animate the working men in the constituency of Haggerston, which I represent in this House. I have not found one of any political creed, whether he be Tory, Radical, or Socialist, who has a good word to say for the Bill. They say that there must be some ulterior purpose to serve in proposing to abolish a body like the School Board of London, which has done such splendid work. In voting against the Second Reading of the Bill I shall feel that I have never given a vote with a greater amount of heartiness.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: There is one feature which has characterised this debate throughout the afternoon and evening, and that is the extreme strength and vigour of the language used in denunciation of the Bill contrasted with the profound calm which has reigned in the House. The Bill has been called by every sort of name. The hon. Member for Poplar who compared me to Rehoboam has, I think, followed the injunction of Solomon, that to spare the rod is to spoil the child. I may also remind the hon. Member that Rehoboam does not furnish an altogether happy illustration of the results of that educational method. I do hope that the Bill may be a better justification of the proverb, and by the Bill I mean the real Bill, and not the Bill which has been described by various Members who have taken upon themselves to expound its provisions, each according to his particular fancy. The hon. Member for North Birmingham drew a picture which certainly did not portray the Bill of the Government. It never entered the mind of the Government, and it certainly is not the Bill before the House. The Bill before the House is simply the application of the Education Act of last year to London, with two changes—first, as to the management of a certain class of schools; and secondly, as to the composition of the Committee which is to advise the Council and to whom the Council may, if it pleases, delegate powers. That is all the novelty in the Bill, which is really a piece of machinery for the extension, and to a certain extent the adaptation, of the Act of 1902 to London. The London County Council is to be the education authority, and the control of the provided schools is to be delegated to the Borough Councils. There is a good deal of misunderstanding as to what that decentralisation or delegation means. It has been alleged that the Government were breaking up the elementary education of London into twenty-nine separate departments. Nothing could be a more untrue representation of the purport of the Bill. What would happen if we followed the Act of 1902? In that case for every school which was not a voluntary school the London County Council would have to appoint four managers, and the Borough Council as the minor local authority, would have to appoint two, and therefore the London County Council would have to deal with over 450 bodies. What we provide in the Bill is that the Borough Councils are to be responsible to the London County Council for the management of the schools. They are empowered to conduct the management through committees consisting of themselves, or of outsiders joined to members of the Councils. Can this be said to be breaking up the educational system of London? What powers do the London County Council retain? I think if hon. Members would only be good enough to read the Act with the Bill they would have clearer notions as to the powers proposed to be conferred. Under the Act the County Council has the powers of the School Board and the complete control of expenditure. Under the Bill the County Council will have power to give general directions and to fix the numbers, salaries, and qualifications of the teachers; the amount of school accommodation needed, and the provision to be made for it. The Council is also the school attendance authority, and regulates the numbers of the staff in all its departments. In fixing the qualifications of the teachers they can acquire variety of experience, and can secure the supply of that great service of teachers to which the Member for Haddingtonshire referred. The Borough Councils will make out estimates for their requirements for repairs, furniture and the like, and submit these to the County Council. Thus, instead of having to keep a check on 450 separate bodies of school managers, the County Council will deal direct with twenty-nine Borough Councils, and will thus be free from care for all the small details which so much oppress the members of the existing School Board—as we heard from the most interesting but somewhat depressing diary which was read to the House by the hon. Member for Camberwell—because the central authority will only pass the estimates and exercise powers of inspection, audit, and the like, so as to ensure that the money is properly spent. In that way, I cannot help thinking the central local authority will find itself relieved from the burden of administration in small matters which has weighed very heavily on the London School Board, while it will not lose control over the general educational policy, or the regulation of the educational system of London. There is no reason to fear that the London County Council and the Borough Councils will desire to alter the existing organisation of the School Board. That organisation only wants to be re-arranged with a view to the new relations between the boroughs and the educational authority; and there will be plenty of time to do that in the interval between the passing of the Bill and its coming into operation. I hope that next year we shall see a new scheme of management of the schools, which will be as effective and less onerous to those who take part in it as that of the London School Board.

The right hon. Member for Cambridge University expressed a wish that special schools, such as those for epileptic children and deaf and dumb children, would not be excluded. I do not think that they are excluded. They are public elementary schools; but that is a matter which may fairly be considered at a later stage of the Bill, and it does not touch the principles with which we are now concerned. What we shall have to consider, and what will have to be dealt with when there is one educational authority for London is the educational problem of the future—the grading of schools, and the determination of what are really public elementary schools, and what are schools which give education higher than elementary under the Act of 1902. But that is an educational problem which rests in the future, and which I do not think concerns the educational principles of the Bill. There are one or two other advantages which must arise from decentralisation. I think there will be greater elasticity imparted to the curriculum of the elementary schools. The School Board system has been rigorous. The School Board inspectors have had to insist on a certain uniformity, which has borne hardly on the poorer parts of London.

DR. MACNAMARA: Hear, hear: we recognise that.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Borough Councils, knowing the needs of their area will, advised by their Committees of management, occupy a stronger position as against the central authority than the existing Boards of Managers can possibly do in relation to the School Board. In some schools progress must be slower and subjects less numerous, and things must be repeated in some schools which do not need repetition in every school. The teaching will be simpler or more complex in one school than in another, and that will be to the great advantage of the children of London. The Borough Councils will also take some account of the relation of elementary education to the industries of their respective areas, and in that way education will be related to local requirements as it never has been before in London. Besides, there will be an increase of local interest created in the schools, and a more serious and constant effort to find employment for the children as they leave the schools. Nothing will be more valuable to the progress of the children in later life than that, when they can earn a livelihood, there will be people always on the alert to secure engagements for such children. Then there is the question of the Committees through whom the Borough Councils are to act. It has been said that the Clause dealing with the Committees is crude. I am afraid that the Clause has been framed on the principle—perhaps too absolutely on the principle so much heard of, and pressed upon us in the debates last autumn—that we should trust the local authorities. The Clause was framed on the assumption that the Borough Councils would exercise common sense in the formation of their Committees, that they would put on these Committees those persons who for so long and successfully interested themselves in education, and worked under the School Board. I have the greatest possible desire that we should not lose the assistance of the managers who have worked with the London School Board. I think it an absolute necessity also that women should have a place in the management of the schools. If this House cannot put that confidence in the Borough Councils, it is perfectly open to hon. Members to make the clause more precise, so as to ensure that there should be persons from outside the Borough Councils, and that some of them should be women. Then as to the provision of sites, I think that some hon. Members have mixed up the question of the choice of sites with the accommodation and provision of schools. But I hold that it is a reasonable provision that the Borough Councils should be entitled to have a word in the choice of the sites in the future. Then if the management of the Borough Councils is inefficient, and if there is any neglect on the part of the local authorities, there is in the last resort the right of the County Council to interpose and represent to the Board of Education that the management is not what it should be, and to enter and make its own provision through its own Committee. I think, therefore, that we are taking every precaution that there should be good management of the schools. I believe that this process of decentralisation, this delegation of power to the Borough Councils, will not only be a great relief to the local authority in regard to the heavy work imposed upon it, but that it will also excite an interest in the education of the children of London which has not existed before, and which should be the object of every Government, even at some temporary sacrifice of good administration, to promote and encourage. I hope I have satisfied the House that this clause as to management, which has been called defective, and many other hard names, may be worked, even as it stands, for the benefit of the children of London.

There is a departure from the Act of 1902, in the constitution of the Committee. Now that departure has been attributed to various sinister motives—to animosity to the London County Council, to love of the Borough Councils, to political interests, to clerical interests. All these are said to have combined to induce the Government to frame a Committee devoid of those elements which the last speaker thought were the basis and main object of the Bill. I should have thought that a Committee on which the preponderance is given to the London County Council would enable hon. Members to trust it. There can be no doubt as to where the predominant influence will rest. One hon. Member suggested that the matter ought to have been settled by scheme; but what would happen would be that when the County Councils had framed its scheme, and brought it before the Board of Education, the Borough Councils would protest that they were not represented. From the experience I have had of the working of the Act of 1902, I should most earnestly deprecate, on behalf of the Board of Education, throwing on that Board the duty of saying whether or no the boroughs should be represented on that Committee. I maintain that the question of whether the Borough Councils should be represented on the Education Committee should be settled by Parliament, and not by the Board of Education. If these Borough Councils are to present their estimates, and to exercise the administrative power, which I wish to see them exercise, then it seems to me not merely equitable, but reasonable and convenient that they should be represented on the Committee. In framing this scheme of a Committee, I have been actuated by a desire to associate all interests concerned in education in the common work of the education of the area. The main principle of the Bill, it must be borne in mind, is that the London County Council shall be the local education authority; that it must have a Committee which it can trust, and whose advice it will be willing to take; that it must have a Committee to which it will be willing to delegate such powers as it does not desire to exercise itself. How the Committee should be framed is not a matter to be discussed on the Second Reading of the Bill. Our object is to lay down the principle which I have submitted—that the Committee must be so framed that the London County Council can give it its full trust and confidence. Having laid down that as the principle of the Bill, and as the desire of the Government, I ask the House to proceed with the Second Reading of the Bill without further cavilling at the present construction of the Committee. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] That exhausts the points of departure from the policy of last session in the Bill now before us. But there remains a question which has been raised, and which I believe is the main question in the minds of many hon. Members opposite, and that is, whether a body directly elected for educational purposes or a body directly elected for general municipal purposes, with education thrown in, is the right sort of authority in the interests of London. We are told that an authority directly elected for educational purposes is democratic, and that an authority directly elected for other than educational purposes is not democratic.

DR. MACNAMARA: Who said that?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, whom I regret not to see in his place, has alleged that a body constituted as this Committee would "De-democratise" our educational system—that the London County Council elected by the ratepayers for general and municipal purposes is democratic, but that the Borough Councils, elected by ratepayers for the purposes of the Borough are clerical or retrograde, or un-democratic. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to go to Poplar or to Bethnal Green and tell the councillors there that they are "De-democratic." Perhaps he might safely do so, because they might not understand jargon which is a convenient vehicle for confused ideas. Perhaps he might explain that this was a notion of democracy constructed *ad hoc* for the purposes of debate, as principles sometimes are. Well, why should education be severed from the rest of municipal work? Surely education, and particularly elementary education, is full of municipal problems. There is a good deal of waste, I am sorry to say, of educational force, because the children going to school do not come in a condition in which they can really benefit by the education provided for them. We have never known this. Our educational deficiencies are due to our own idleness, our own shiftlessness, our own stupidity; but we have never been able to say that we could not learn because we were cold or hungry, or because our homes were noisy and squalid, or because we were tired out before the day began with running errands or with doing domestic work. These are serious questions which should engage the attention of the municipal authority, for we must bear in mind that there is a good deal besides teaching which goes towards the education of the poor. And then there are great educational problems which are worthy of the attention of any Municipality, however great. There is the adapting of the education given to the needs of the children; there are the particular industrial and trade needs as well as the higher forms of education. And I would not limit the considerations to the material and industrial needs. There is need that our education and training should be such as to form the character, to add to interest life and to give a permanent value to the education of a child. And I think with these great problems to be solved--and with these great objects in view we may well hope that these new municipalities, between whom it has been so often said to-night that friction is sure to arise—will forget the squalid jealousies which have been attributed to them by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, and will give their whole heart to the great work of educating the children of this generation to be the good citizens of the next.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): The hon. Gentleman has addressed a House in a state of political calmness that it is worth while to compare with the feeling which pervades the country. I suppose we have scarcely ever had a measure of first-class importance debated in a House so thin, and in which the speeches on the whole have been so quiet. But in the country we have a feeling of religious conviction aroused to an extent that has not been observed for many years. We have men of position and substance in the country; men to whom the old-fashioned phrase "Fear God and honour the King" may well be applied; men who fill all sorts of positions in public life and serve their fellow citizens without reward. We have these men, excellent citizens and responsible fathers of families, called upon to choose between their conscience and a statute of the law, and for the first time in my time—or in the time of many of those present—we have a great body of respectable English citizens declaring that they will not obey the Acts passed by this House—that they will not obey this Act when it is passed. The House is calm because it is discussing that which is undoubtedly important, but is not a matter of vital importance to the country. The country has not yet thought how the Education Bill is to be adapted to London. To the country the essential vice and injustice of the Act of last year and of this Bill are apparent. It is therefore, calm to discuss details, but you cannot be sure that it will be calm when you apply the Act. It has not yet been put in force in the country; when it has that will be the time for the Secretary to the Board of Education to judge of the political calm. He will then, perhaps, find himself in a sort of storm-centre, and he will not enjoy the position. However, may I say a few words upon those questions of administrative detail upon which the Secretary has not dwelt? He has treated this Bill as though it were a mere matter of machinery, and I apprehend he proposes to substitute for an inefficient a more efficient machinery. That should be the Government's object, and yet, curiously enough, that is not their declared object. They do not profess to substitute a more or less efficient machinery, because the Prime Minister in his speech was careful to disclaim any intention of casting any reflections upon the London School Board, which is one of the public institutions most esteemed, not only by those under whose jurisdiction it comes, but by the whole of England. The right hon. Gentleman, in defending this Bill, was careful not to say anything calculated to lessen the London School Board in public esteem. But that is a small matter compared with his restraint in not attacking it. What is the efficiency that you expect from the new bodies? It is certainly not to be supposed they will be more ardent in the cause of education, nor is it supposed they will be any less extravagant than the London School Board. I, for my own part, have listened carefully to what the hon. Gentleman has just said about the advantages he expects to be derived from the new bodies. But he does not expect that the financial control will be more efficient. On the contrary, it seems the desire of the Ministry to reproduce in our local institutions the kind of muddle and mischief that we have in this House. We have here learned the great disadvantage of having a mass of duties beyond our administrative capacity. In the municipalities there has been a sort of specialisation in the functions that they have to perform. These duties are apparently to be thrown into the hands of one body, so that the electors will no longer be able to choose men especially fitted for an especial purpose. I really begin to think that the Ministry are elevating muddle to the dignity of method. The very essence of this Bill is an attack upon an efficient body for its inefficiency. It is not enough to call this Ministry inefficient; it is anti-efficient; and we have a striking instance of that in this Bill. But it is not the administrative side of the Bill that I wish to lay the most stress upon. I began by drawing attention to the state of feeling in the country. One of the essential features of these Education Bills is that they make the great masses of people pay for the teaching of doctrines in which they do not believe. It is that injustice which this Bill proposes to extend to London.

Since the last Bill passed we have had a remarkable movement spreading throughout the country, a movement on the part of responsible law-abiding citizens for refusing to pay rates or taxes to be levied by this Bill. I think the Ministry ought not to allow that situation to pass without observation in dealing with this Bill. Have they taken the trouble to inquire what is the Nonconformist grievance? An hon. Member behind me said last year that, if men would not go to the State for taxes they would go for rates. Under the old system the theory was that the State paid, by means of taxes, for secular education alone, and that in the case of School Boards ratepayers paid for whatever other education might be required over and above the State grant, but in the voluntary schools religious teaching was paid for entirely by subscribers. That was the old theory on which the State acted. It was the theory laid down by the Act of 1870 and which has been since steadily maintained. Now we have the subscribers definitely and finally relieved from that charge. Therefore the Nonconformists are called upon to pay by these rates the very sum that was previously paid by the subscribers, and they are faced for the first time with a demand upon their consciences which they cannot avoid. They will stand a great deal that is bad in practice so long as the theory is good, but when both theory and practice are bad as Englishmen they naturally rise up against them. That is a situation with which the Ministry have not fairly dealt in this Bill. They say that, after all, the existing system does not make a great difference, and that the injustice complained of is exceptional. But that is no answer, and this is an injustice to which the Nonconformist will not submit. He would be unworthy of his creed and nationality if he were to do so. May I remind the House of what was laid down as a Church view by the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich? In a passage of fine eloquence, which greatly impressed the House and which well repaid consideration, if only on argumentative grounds, he put forward the view that the Church depended upon apostolic succession. That is the theory which the Church has taught in schools throughout the country, and it cannot be taught without teaching children to regard Nonconformists as being without the pale of the Church in its true and legitimate sense. That is the teaching you put into the hands of 13,000 or 14,000 laymen in the country, under the control of the clergymen and the foundation managers. That is the doctrine which must be taught to the children of Nonconformists.

SIR JOHN GORST: Oh!

MR. ROBSON: The right hon. Gentleman says "No," but——

SIR JOHN GORST: No, I said "what nonsense." In thousands of Church schools on four days of the week the same kind of Bible teaching is given as that in the Board schools, and on the fifth day, while the Church children are taught the Catechism, the Nonconformist children have a Bible lesson of the same character as on the other four days.

Mr. ROBSON: I greatly doubt the generality of the right hon. Gentleman's statement, but it does not meet my argument, which is, that the Church insists on having the control of teaching in these schools. If the Church is willing to adopt that system and give up the control then away go the grievances of the Nonconformists. But the Church will not adopt that system, and, therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman speaks of cases of which Nonconformists cannot complain, and which exist not because of the law but because of the will of the particular managers, by way of indicating that there is no Nonconformist grievance, then I say to the right hon. Gentleman, "What nonsense!" It is nonsense of a character which is not creditable either to the logic or the candour of the right hon. Gentleman. Everyone knows that the state of things I have been describing is the state of things permitted by law, and that the teaching of religion in the non-provided schools is put into the hands of the clergy and the foundation managers, and that once it is put into their hands no Nonconformist has a right to demand any religious teaching except that given by the Church. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well there is no such right, and that it is denied by those who pretend to be champions of religious teaching. They will get the law into such a condition that the child of a Nonconformist will be compelled to have religious teaching detrimental to his faith, or no teaching at all. This is the grievance which this Bill proposes to extend, and I warn the Ministry that they will have to consider something more in this Bill than has yet been considered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Burdett-Coutts.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILLS IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—

Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

CHEW'S FOUNDATION.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying that he will withhold his consent from the Scheme under The Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and amending Acts, for the management of the Charity of Chew's Foundation in the parish of Dunstable, in the county of Bedford, founded by deed of the 16th day of September, 1724.—(*Mr. Ashton.*)

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 29th April, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).

Report [28th April] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Pym.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 3).

Mr. COMPTON RICKETT reported from the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills; That the parties opposing the City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway Bill had stated that the evidence of Walter Burgh Gair, Merchant, of 8, Bishopsgate Street, London, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that Walter Burgh Gair do attend the said Committee on Friday, at Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, that Walter Burgh Gair do attend the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills on Friday, at Eleven of the clock.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Whiston; Town Bent; Old Mills Pit; Springfield Pit; Tyning Pit; Farrington Pit; Hyde; Coppull; Manvers; Loscore; Ilkeston; Heanor; Manvers Main; Carhouse; Rotherham; Altham; Ashton Field; Pontefract; Robin Hood; Topcliffe; Trencherbone; Craighead Blantyre; Kelty; and Methil Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Torquay; Stockton-on-Tees; Manchester; and Newport; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dundonald, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petitions against: from South Shields; and Sunderland; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Catrine; Kirkoswald; Muirkirk; and Aberdeen; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Kirkcaldy, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

Petition from Shoreditch, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Edinburgh; Shettleston; Tollcross; Hawkhill; Aberdeen; and Glasgow (two); to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petition from Lower Bebington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Altham; Whitson; Ashton Field; Hyde; Town Bent; Coppull; Manners; Farrington; Tyning Pit; Loscore; Ilkeston; Heanor; Manvers Main (No. 2); Carhouse; Rotherham; Old Thornecliffe; Springfield Pit; Old Mills Pit; Craighead; Blantyre; Kelty; Trencherbone; Pontefract; Topcliffe; Muirkirk; Methil; and Blairadam Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 129.]

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Sydney Buxton]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 130.]

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Arthur Elliot]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 131.]

POST OFFICE CONTRACT FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF MAILS BETWEEN GLASGOW, GREENOCK, AND CAMPBELTOWN.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th April; Mr. Arthur Elliot]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.]

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133].

TURKEY (No. 3, 1903).

Copy presented, of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WARNED.

Copy ordered, "of Quarterly Returns, by counties, of the public elementary schools (1) which have been warned by the Board of Education under Article 86 of the Code, including schools from which the Grant has been withheld under that article; (2) which have been warned by the Board of Education that the annual grant will, in future, be withheld unless defects in the school premises are remedied; (3) the annual grants to which have been suspended for three months or more from the date of the receipt by the Board of Education of the inspector's report on account of defects in school premises (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 240, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir Francis Powell.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Imperial Non-military Expenditure in Transvaal and Orange River Colony.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the total expenditure from Imperial funds since the conclusion of the war in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony on non-military purposes, and from what sources, Estimates or loan, has it been provided; how much of this expenditure is in the nature of temporary advances, to be recouped out of the proposed guaranteed loan, and how much is free gift.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The total expenditure on purposes unconnected with the war and non-military consists of the £8,000,000 voted as a grant-in-aid of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony last autumn, and provided from the Estimates, 1902-3, viz., £3,000,000, the sum required for free grants to burghers to assist their restoration to their homes, as provided in Article 10 of the terms of surrender; £2,000,000, the sum required for grants to other persons in respect of war losses in the two Colonies; and £3,000,000, the sum required for loans to be advanced by the Colonial Governments to supplement the above grants. Of these sums the first two are a free gift and the last is an advance to be recovered from the guaranteed loan. This does not include expenditure on compensation, which may be considered military in character.

Soldiers Imprisoned in South Africa.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether all British and Colonial soldiers undergoing sentences in the Cape Colony for offences arising out of the late war were liberated when the rebels and all persons imprisoned for acts in connection with hostilities in South Africa were discharged from custody.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) No information is available to enable a reply to be given to the Question. The two classes of offences are, however, quite distinct, and have no connection with each other.

Local Education Authority—By-Laws

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if the local education authority for a county must make new by-laws for school attendance, or if they can by resolution continue such by-laws as are now in force; and, if so, whether such a resolution will require the sanction of the Board of Education or any other formality to make it valid.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The existing by-laws remain in force and there is no obligation on the new local authority to make fresh ones; but they have the power to do so if they wish, subject to the provisions of Section 74 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870. No resolution of the local authority is required to continue existing by-laws in force.

Post Office Electric Generating Station.

MR. HARRIS (Tynemouth): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the Post Office are proposing to provide, at Blackfriars or elsewhere, a station for generating electric energy, and if so, would he state for what purposes the energy is required; whether he has invited, or will invite, tenders for the supply of the energy required from the companies already authorised under statutory powers to supply electric energy in the district or districts in which energy is proposed to be used; whether it is proposed to break up the streets for the purpose of laying mains for conveying the energy to be generated at the proposed station, and if so, under what powers; and whether, if those companies will supply energy at a less cost per unit than that at which the electricity can be generated at the proposed station he will take the energy from the companies.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The post office is proposing to provide at Blackfriars a station for generating electric energy for the purpose of working the telegraphic system of the Department. The wires conveying the current will be placed in ducts laid underground in the usual manner under the powers conferred by the Telegraph Acts. Offers to supply current have been received from two companies, and are now under consideration; but it does not appear likely that the cost will be as low as that at which the Department could provide its own supply; and, apart from the question of price, there are other objections to depending upon an outside supply.

Ireland—Exchequer Issue in Payment of Poor Rate.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the amount of the Exchequer Issue, 1901–2, to Ireland in payment of half the Poor Rate under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The total sum issued from the Exchequer under Section 48 of the Act was £727,655. Of this sum £316,730 10s. was in respect of half the amount certified to have been raised by Poor Rate, and £410,924 10s. was in respect of half the amount certified to have been raised by county cess off agricultural land in the standard year.

House of Lords Manuscripts, Volume 2.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if Volume 2 (New Series) of the MSS. of the House of Lords will be presented to the House of Commons and be available to Members of that House in the same way as other Parliamentary Papers.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) I will endeavour to arrange for the issue to Members of Volume 2 of the New Series of the MSS. of the House of Lords in the same way as Volume 1 was issued.

The Admiralty and the Pacific Cable.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty were consulted as to the route to be taken by the Pacific Cable; and, if so, whether they reported that the cable would be less exposed to risk in time of war if landed at Fanning Island than if landed at the Sandwich Islands.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The Admiralty were not directly consulted as to the route to be taken by the Pacific Cable, although they furnished information at various times on points of detail, and gave assistance in the matter of surveys.

Irish Land Bill—Future Tenants.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether future tenants are included in the benefits of the Irish Land Bill, and, if so, under what provisions of the Bill; and whether their number and rental have been estimated for in the statement that the amount of rental to be dealt with is about £4,000,000 sterling.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The future tenants are included in Clause 1 of the Bill. The answer to the second Question is in the affirmative.

Irish Land Purchase Acts—Proceedings for Default.

MR. CHANNING: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of cases in which the Land Commissioners have had to take proceedings against tenant purchasers under the Land Purchase Acts for default; in what number of cases in which the holdings have been sold has the Guarantee Fund had to be drawn upon; and what have been the total sums thus charged to and drawn from the Guarantee Fund.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) In reply to the first inquiry, I would refer to the statistics given in answer to the Question of my hon. friend the Member for York, on Monday last. † With reference to the second inquiry, I refer to the reply to the Question put yesterday by my hon. friend the Member for Great Yarmouth. ‡

Militia Officers—Recognition of Services During South African War.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any of the recommendations of the commanding officers of Militia battalions that went to South Africa in 1902 have been favourably considered; and whether the services of these officers have received any recognition.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Those recommendations were duly considered, but in view of the fact that large numbers of officers and men who have been fighting in South Africa for long periods could not possibly receive any sort of recognition, owing to the necessity of keeping rewards within reasonable limits, it was decided that no rewards could be conferred upon any Militia regiments sent to South Africa during 1902 I may add that some 2,800 promotions or rewards were given to officers for the War, but as nearly 400,000 troops were employed, necessarily a large number of deserving cases could not be recognised.

Royal Garrison Regiment Return.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will extend the Return relative to the battalions of the Royal Garrison Regiment stationed at Malta, granted on the Motion of the hon. Member for Oldham, so that it may include all the battalions of the regiment at present organised.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) There is no objection on the part of the War Office to the extension of the Return in the manner suggested, but it will require some little time to obtain the necessary information from Halifax, Nova Scotia. The additional figures will be included in the Return of the hon. Member for Oldham.

Treatment of British Indian Subjects in the Transvaal.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware that the stores of a British India merchant of ten years' standing at Wakkerstroom, named Mr. Hoosein Amod, have been closed by the British authorities, and his trading licence refused; and that another trader in the town of Rustenburg, Mr. Sooliman Ismael, who had a trading licence last year, has also been refused his licence this year, and that they are not allowed to transfer their businesses to persons willing to purchase them; and, if so, will he call for reports from the authorities and state what steps he proposes to take.

---

† See page 455. ‡ See page 649.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the managing proprietor of the firm of Messrs. M. C. Cumroodeen and Co., who is also chairman of the British India Association there, was ordered off a public footpath at Johannesburg last month and prohibited from walking upon it; and that a British Indian subject, named Mr. N. D. Deboo, who, after satisfying the requisite test in the English language, was permitted to land at Durban and was travelling to Heidelberg to take up an appointment there, was compelled to leave his train on the Transvaal frontier and prevented from proceeding to his destination, with the result that he lost his appointment; and that British Indian subjects have been called upon to quit Johannesburg, and some of them sentenced to a month's imprisonment on account of their inability to leave the place; and, if so, will he inquire of the British authorities under what circumstances these occurrences took place, and take steps to prevent their recurrence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have no information on the matters alluded to in these Questions, but I have asked the Government to furnish me with a report.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been drawn to the murder of a Mahomedan fruit-seller at Durban on or about the 6th February last in which the culprit was acquitted on the ground of his having been of unsound mind when he committed the crime; and to the death of a coolie at Ladysmith on or about the 9th March last who was suspected of having been murdered, and in respect of which the jury found that the death was the result of an accident; and whether he will call for a report of these cases from the local authorities and place the same upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have no information as to these cases, which appear to have been dealt with by the Courts of the Colony, whose decisions, as the hon. Member will recognise, I am not in a position to review. I will, however, ask the Governor to report upon them.

Censorship of Letters and Telegrams in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies.

Mr. CHANNING: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, in spite of the assurance given in the House on 24th November, 1902,† that there was no restriction upon or supervision of mails or cables to and from any portion of South Africa, by the Peace Preservation Ordinance subsequently passed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies postmasters are empowered to open any letter or telegram supposed to contain seditious matter; and, if so, will he state what are the circumstances since November which have led to this legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) It is not the case that postmasters are empowered to open any letter or telegram supposed to contain seditious matter. They may intercept any letter, document, or parcel sent through the post which they have reasonable grounds to suspect of containing treasonable or seditious matter; and in such case they must send the document forthwith to the resident magistrate with a written statement of the grounds of suspicion. If the resident magistrate is satisfied that reasonable grounds of suspicion do exist he may then open the document. I understand that in practice the authority of the Lieutenant-Governor would be required before a document was so opened, and it is proposed to make provision for this by an amending ordinance.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Condemned Soldier at Pretoria.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that the condemned man, J. Roache, who has been sentenced to death at Pretoria, has appealed to the High Commissioner for a commutation of his sentence on the grounds of the scantiness of the evidence connecting him with firing the fatal shot, and also on account of his service of eight years in the Army; and whether, taking all the circumstances into account, he will ask that the sentence be suspended pending an appeal to the Crown.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxv., 238.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): By the Letters Patent the prerogative of mercy is vested in the Lieutenant-Governor, in whose discretion and humanity I have absolute confidence, and who will no doubt take all the circumstances of the case into consideration.

War Stores in the Transvaal.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that quantities of war stores were recently destroyed in the Transvaal; and, if so, will he explain why they were not otherwise disposed of.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have no information regarding this matter, but I have telegraphed for it.

7th Hussars.

SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that fifteen troopers of the 7th Hussars are now looking after eighty-four horses at Hampton Court Barracks; and that the sentries at the Palace are taken off, the whole of the men being employed on stable picket; and that at the headquarters of the 7th Hussars at Hounslow two squadrons consist of twenty-eight men who have 100 horses to look after; and whether this state of things can be temporarily remedied by the employment of fatigue parties of the Household Cavalry, whose numbers are largely in excess of their horses, in aid of the 7th Hussars.

MR. BRODRICK: The men and horses of the 2nd Provisional Regiment of Hussars, of which the reserve squadron of the 7th Hussars forms part, are distributed as follows—London detachment, 17 men, 13 horses; Hampton Court, 28 men, 84 horses; Headquarters, 233 men. 316 horses. It is not considered desirable to employ men of the Household Cavalry as suggested. The numbers of the detachment at Hampton Court will be increased.

Somaliland—Mullah's Supply of Munitions.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has information which he can communicate to the House as to the channels through which the followers of the Mullah in Somaliland are supplied with rifles and ammunition, with which they are stated to be so plentifully supplied.

MR. BRODRICK: It is believed that the Mullah has obtained his arms and ammunition chiefly from Arab smugglers on the coast of Somaliland. Every effort has been, and is being, made by His Majesty's Government, in consultation with the Italian Government, to suppress this traffic.

Naval Base at St. Margaret's Hope.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can now state the extent and rental of the ground acquired for the purpose of the naval base at St. Margaret's Hope, and the price to be paid for the same.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I must ask the hon. Member to postpone this Question as the negotiations are still in progress in regard to the area to be acquired at Rosyth.

Sugar Exports from Mauritius to Australia.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there has been any decrease in the exports of sugar during the last few years from Mauritius to Australia; and what duties are levied by the Australian Government on sugar coming from Mauritius.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There has been a falling off in recent years in the exports of sugar from Mauritius to Australia. The duty on sugar, the produce of the sugar cane, imported into Australia is 6s. a cwt.

Russian Demands Respecting Manchuria.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps His Majesty's Government intend to take in reference to Russia's demands regarding Manchuria.

Mr. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): At the same time may I ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can make any statement to the House concerning the Russian demand to China respecting Manchuria, and the replies of His Majesty's and other Governments.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord Cranborne, Rochester): The question to which the hon. Members refer is engaging the earnest attention of His Majesty's Government, and we are in communication with the Governments concerned, but it would be premature to make any statement to the House at the present moment.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask whether in view of the fact that the Secretary of State has promised to make an announcement in another place, he will undertake that one shall be made simultaneously in this House?

*Lord CRANBORNE: That question should be addressed to the Leader of the House, who, I have no doubt, will desire to treat this House with all possible consideration.

Tientsin Railway Siding Dispute.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can inform the House of the result of the arbitration in the dispute between Great Britain and Russia as to the Tientsin railway siding and the adjacent lands; and what steps have to be taken to carry out the arrangement come to.

*Lord CRANBORNE: Information has been received by telegraph from His Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires* at Peking that the arbitrator has issued his award on part of the case submitted to him, namely, as it is stated in the telegram, the Chi Chia Lou Land. The land is to remain railway property, and the railway is to compensate Prince Su to the extent of the amount originally paid to the Chinese seller. We are awaiting a despatch on the subject from Mr. Townley as to further details.

Anatolian Railway Concession

Mr GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on what date did His Majesty's Government receive the copy now in their possession of the Convention between the Turkish Government and the Concessionaires of the Anatolian Railway Company (Baghdad line) quoted by Mr. Vice-Consul Waugh in his Report dated 9th March and received at the Foreign Office on 16th March last.

*Lord CRANBORNE: It would not be in accordance with the usual practice to give the date in such a matter as this, unless it was proposed to lay the Paper on the Table.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I want to know whether it was not received on the same date as Vice-Consul Waugh's Report, which actually contained extracts from it.

*Lord CRANBORNE: Vice-Consul Waugh, I think, quoted newspaper reports.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: No, if the noble Lord will refer he will see that extracts from the Convention were quoted by Mr. Waugh.

Baghdad Railway Scheme.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has any communication with regard to the Baghdad railway scheme now been received from the British Ambassador at Constantinople; and will His Majesty's Government, before departing from or varying their decision already arrived at with regard to this scheme, lay any such communication on the Table of this House.

*Lord CRANBORNE: Communications have at various times been received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the Baghdad Railway. If circumstances should arise which might cause a modification of the views of His Majesty's Government, as recently announced, they would consider whether any correspondence could be laid before the House.

Bovine Tuberculosis—Cost of Commissions and Compensation to Owners.

MR. JOYCE: On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the total cost to date of the Commissions to enquire into bovine tuberculosis; when the Commission at present sitting is likely to issue its report; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of adopting the principle of compensation for confiscation in connection with tuberculosis seizures.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I am not in a position to give the information asked for on the first point referred to in the Question, viz., the cost of the Commissions. The matter is one for the Treasury. As to the second point, I have already replied to three Questions by the hon. Member this session as to when the Commission is likely to report, and I am not able to add anything to those answers. I cannot give any promise as to the matter referred to in the last part of the Question, especially whilst the Report of the Royal Commission is pending.

MR. JOYCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman seriously consider the question of giving compensation to those people who had absolutely no knowledge of tuberculosis being present and had therefore no control over it.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am quite alive to the difficulties to which the hon. Member refers, and as they constitute one of the chief questions for inquiry, obviously it is impossible to make any legislative proposal until the Royal Commission has reported.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the question when the Report has been issued?

MR. WALTER LONG: Certainly; it will be my duty to do so.

Public Record Office.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government have considered if the Public Record Office is sufficiently distant from houses, stables and other buildings to be secure from damage or destruction by fire; and whether, seeing that the use for commercial or manufacturing purposes of Cliffords Inn and adjoining properties, which are now offered for sale, would be a source of danger to the Record Office, and interfere with its extension and preclude its isolation, they propose to take any, and, if so, what steps in the matter.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsay): The Commissioners of Works have for some time past been taking action to secure the protection of the Record Office from fire. On the north side arrangements have been made for the maintenance of an open space of nearly fifty feet in width, extending from Chancery Lane to Fetter Lane and this is considered sufficient to secure the buildings from damage or destruction. On the south side of the south-western angle of the building, arrangements have been arrived at for the setting back of the new building frontage, and the use of the property referred to for commercial or manufacturing purposes will be carefully watched by H.M. Government so as to avert all source of danger to the Record Office. I may add that room is reserved on the Record Office site for a further extension of the building.

London and North Western Railway Company's Charges.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the fact that the London and North Western Railway Company accept goods for delivery on their line carriage forward from shippers, on the understanding that those goods are to be delivered against payment of railway carriage, but instead of so acting they deliver the goods free of railway carriage, charging it to the account of the consignee, and then, failing to receive payment, compel shippers to pay

even three years afterwards; and, if so, whether he will take steps to stop this practice.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): If the hon. Member will make a definite complaint to the Board of Trade under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, I will give it careful consideration.

Income Tax Inquiry.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, N. R., Cleveland): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in the reference to a Select Committee appointed to consider questions connected with the Income Tax he will include an examination into the practicability of a graduation of the tax above the £700 limit.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ARTHUR ELLIOT, Durham): The terms of reference are not yet settled. They will, of course, be as wide as possible.

Scottish Board of Manufactures.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Report of the Committee on the Administration of Grants-in-Aid of Art by the Board of Manufactures in Scotland has been presented; and whether it will be in the hands of Members before the Scotch Estimates are considered.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Report has not been presented. The deliberations of the Committee are nearly completed, but have been unavoidably delayed by the illness of the Home Secretary, who is the Chairman.

Magherafelt Riots.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to an attack on Easter Monday evening in the town of Magherafelt on a cordon of police on duty there by processionists armed with swords; and whether, seeing that some of the police were injured, and were again stoned at the town hall, he will state whether any, and if so what, steps are being taken to restore order in this locality.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I stated on Monday last † that proceedings had been instituted by the Crown against a number of persons for participating in the occurrences on this occasion. This being so, I must respectfully decline to discuss at the present stage the conduct either of the police or the mob. There has been no repetition of disturbance at Magherafelt since the date mentioned.

Irish Land Bill—Marquis of Ely's Estate.

*MR. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if any provision is made in the coming Irish Land Bill for such estates as that of the Marquis of Ely in county Fermanagh, now in the English Court of Chancery; and, if not, will he take steps to provide that such is provided in the Bill.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not acquainted with the circumstances of the Ely estate, but if, in the case of estates which are being administered by, or are under the control of, the English Court of Chancery, there be any persons who come within the description in Clause 15 of the Bill, there would appear to be nothing to prevent a sale being carried out by such persons with the consent of the Court of Chancery.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that negotiations are going on for the sale of this estate and the question is shall it be carried out under the new Act or under the existing law?

MR. ATKINSON: It may be so, but the consent of the Court will have to be obtained, of course.

Irish Land Bill.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, how he arrived at the sum of £4,000,000 second term rents to be dealt with by the Land Bill, seeing that first term judicial rents amount to £5,483,558 on 342,019 holdings, when there remain, after deducting 73,917 holdings already bought, 74,365 holdings to be dealt with to make up the total of 490,301 holdings in Ireland; and whether the estimate of £4,000,000 includes demesne lands; and, if not, what is the estimated annual value of such lands.

---

† See page 475.

Mr. ATKINSON: The question of the hon. Member appears to be based on several erroneous assumptions. Firstly, he assumes that the Land Acts apply to each of the 490,301 agricultural holdings in Ireland, whereas there are tens of thousands of such holdings to which those Acts do not apply at all. Secondly, he assumes that none of the 73,917 holdings purchased were included in the holdings upon which rents were fixed for a first time, whereas many of them were so included. Thirdly, he appears to leave out of account the 87,835 holdings on which rents were fixed a second time up to the end of December, 1902, with an average reduction on first term rents of 21·4 per cent., amounting to £310,783. The estimate of £4,000,000 was the best approximation that could be made. My right hon. friend did not profess that it was absolutely accurate. The rental of those particular demesne lands to which the Land Acts apply was taken into account. I must refer the hon. Member to Section 58 of the Act of 1896, and Clause 9 of the Bill, to ascertain what those demesne and other lands are.

Mr. LAMBERT asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman could state what was the number of holdings to which the Land Bill applied.

Mr. ATKINSON: It would be absolutely impossible to ascertain the precise number.

Mr. LAMBERT: Can the right hon. and learned Gentleman give us even an approximate estimate?

Mr. ATKINSON: No.

Great Britain, Russia and Persia.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, have the questions involving the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia and elsewhere, which had been under discussion between the two Governments on 9th March last, now approached a satisfactory settlement, and has the amicable understanding in regard thereto desired by His Majesty's Government been arrived at; do the questions referred to include those involving the respective interests of the two countries in Manchuria as well as in Asia Minor, Afghanistan, and the Dardanelles: and are communications still proceeding, or have they been broken off.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): There really is nothing to add to the answer given by my noble friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs to a very similar question some time ago.†

Town Holdings Committee.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether the Government will consider the advisability of re-appointing the Town Holdings Committee to enquire into and report upon the existing terminable leasehold system and the disabilities under which town tenants, inhabitant householders, and tenement occupiers labour.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: We do not propose to re-appoint this Committee.

Baghdad Railway Scheme.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES; I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury is there any, and if so what, foundation for the statements recently and generally circulated that renewed proposals have been made by Foreign Governments or financiers with a view to obtain the participation of His Majesty's Government in the Baghdad railway scheme; and have His Majesty's Government any intention of reconsidering their decision as to this railway or of entering into new communications with regard thereto.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxix., 105.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This matter stands exactly where it was when I replied to my hon. friend on Thursday last.†

Speed of Motor-Cars.

MR. KENNETH BALFOUR (Christchurch): I beg to give notice that this day four weeks I shall call attention to the inconsiderate driving of a small number of automobilists, and move a Resolution.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I understand it has been arranged that a Vote which will enable the House to discuss the question of Somaliland will be put down to-morrow. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will confirm that and say also what other Votes he proposes to take. Will he also tell us with regard to next week whether the Government still intend to take the Irish Land Bill on Monday, and proceed with it for the rest of the week, or if not, what other business will be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards the business to-morrow the right hon. Gentleman is quite right in supposing that it is the intention of the Government, at the very reasonable request made by the Leader of the Opposition, to put down a Vote to-morrow which will enable the operations in Somaliland to be discussed. I have caused inquiries to be made, and I am given to understand that the best Vote on which to take it would be the Army Estimates, Vote 7, Provisions and Forage. Of course, I have no authority to speak on the point, but I believe there will be no difficulty in taking the general discussion on that Vote. If it should not last the whole evening, and I think it will not, I propose to put down the Post Office Vote and Post Office Packet Service. With regard to next week, as I hope to finish the Education Bill in the course of this afternoon's sitting, on Monday I shall take the Irish Land Bill. Of course, that is subject to the possibility of my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland being fit for the labour of watching the Bill. I have no reason to believe he will be away, and I therefore think I may, with some confidence, indicate that that will be the course of business.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) Can the right hon. Gentleman give an estimate of the time to be occupied by the Second Reading debate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that, although the Bill is one of great importance, there is not much probability of any Second Reading opposition to it, and I hope, therefore, that the House will consider two days sufficient.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I think that would fall in with the views of the Irish Members.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the House discuss the policy of the Government in Somaliland on an Army Vote?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is entirely in the discretion of the Chairman, but if the hon. Member can suggest any method by which the area of debate can be widened, I shall be glad to adopt it.

MR. BRYCE: As the Foreign Office was in charge at the time the operations were commenced could not the subject be discussed on that Vote?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I speak with great diffidence, because I think that no member of the House has the right even faintly to indicate what would be the judgment of the Chairman of Committees, or the Speaker, as the case might be. But the real difficulty is that, if I put down the Vote for the salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as the first Vote, we cannot then discuss the military operations, while, on the other hand, if I put down the Vote for Forage, etc., which I had indicated as the best, it is conceivable that some difficulty may be raised as to the discussion of the policy which led to the war. I think that nothing would be gained by laying down too rigid a limitation.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Stuart-Wortley (added in respect of the Pistols Bill), and had appointed in substitution: Mr. James Hope.

---

† See page 220.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now a read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): I should like to call the attention of the House to a matter referred to by the hon. Member for North Camberwell in his speech yesterday, *viz.*, the Resolution passed by the London County Council in regard to this Bill. It contained two alternatives to the Bill, and indicated a preference for either the maintenance of the present system, which, of course, is *ad hoc*, or the creation of one directly elected educational authority, which would have complete control over all grades of education. The hon. Member argued that the second alternative meant an *ad hoc* authority, which would make both alternatives mean the same thing. I think he will admit now that he was in error in arguing that, because if that alternative had meant an *ad hoc* authority it would have said so distinctly. My contention is proved by the fact that when the Resolution was before the County Council, in order to make the second alternative mean an *ad hoc* authority and not as at first intended the County Council as the education authority, they were compelled to accept an Amendment with these words, "specially elected for that purpose." The hon. Member was, therefore, hardly justified yesterday afternoon in showering upon me that declamatory scorn which I always listen to with pleasure, and which I do not mind when applied to myself on such unsubstantial grounds as in this case. Now it has been alleged against this Bill that it has been brought forward by the Government for political and party motives. That allegation was expressed by the hon. Member for West Nottingham, who evolved from his imagination a history of the genesis of the Bill which he described with a fluency that I greatly envy him. He stated that the Government had at one time determined upon a plan involving the creation of an *ad hoc* authority, but that they had abandoned it for "political reasons, political prepossessions, and party jealousy." This is a very strange charge to emanate from a member of a Party over which there has recently come a most extraordinary transformation scene in their views with regard to the education authority for London, and I think it is worth while for the House to listen for a moment while I examine the history of that change in the views of the Party opposite. On the 12th of June last year the London School Board, a body which I think is permeated by the opinions of the Party opposite in their strongest colour, passed a resolution by a majority of twenty-six to eighteen, to the effect that the London County Council should be the education authority for London.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Will the hon. Member read the resolution?

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: I have not a copy of it.

DR. MACNAMARA: I have no knowledge of it.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: If it is not the case as I have stated, then, of course, this initiatory incident in my argument falls to the ground, but not the argument itself. I think it will be within the recollection of hon. Members that from that time and throughout the autumn it was the cry of the Party opposite that the London County Council should be the education authority—the London County Council as opposed to the Water Board. There may have been other expressions of opinion, but I am in the recollection of hon. Members who read the public Press in stating that the main contention was between the London County Council and the Water Board, which it was supposed was going to be proposed by the Government. That went on until the month of February in this year, when there appeared in the *Daily News* a letter from Dr. Clifford asking what on earth they meant by advocating the London County Council as the education authority, and why they did not advocate an *ad hoc* authority. Upon that followed the meeting at Queen's Hall, organised by the National Union of Teachers, which passed a unanimous resolution in favour of an *ad hoc* authority. Then the Party opposite immediately discarded the London County Council as the education authority, and threw themselves and their support into the proposition of the National Union. By various means it was attempted to convert the London County Council, but the proposal did not come forward until yesterday, and then, I admit, the County Council was captured by it. What is the reason of all this? It is not far to seek. It is that hon. Members opposite recognise the enormous power possessed by the Union at elections. May I give the House an instance of that power? Some years ago there was a schoolmaster in the North of England, who was elected, no doubt deservedly, for his ability, President of the National Union. He had a quarrel with the managers of his school, and was brought to London by the National Union. Nine months after he came to London he stood for a populous constituency for the London School Board, under the auspices of the National Union, and was successful, securing no fewer than 18,951 votes. Shortly after, he had a dispute with the National Union, and they deserted him. He ceased to be their President, and at the next election, when he stood again for the same constituency, instead of receiving 18,000 votes he only obtained 405, That is an instance of what the hon. Member for Camberwell calls eloquence in numbers. The hon. Member for North Birmingham said yesterday that the real influence of the teacher was in the schoolroom, but this incident constitutes a strange commentary upon that observation, because it shows that their main influence lies not in the school-room but in the polling booth. I hope that after this description of the process of change in the views of hon. Members opposite, we shall not again hear party politics attributed to the Government in this matter. We know where party politics come in. They come in with the *ad hoc* body. With regard to such bodies there are certain grave cardinal objections. They produce faddists and doctrinaires, and the biggest faddists always rise to the highest positions. What we want is a body of sound common-sense men, assisted by expert advice. An *ad hoc* body is habitually extravagant, and it must be contrary to sound principles of administration, because it divorces the spending of money from the levying of money. It is contrary to the principles on which this House itself is constituted, this House, which will survive the attacks made on it from this point of view by the hon. Member for South Shields yesterday, and will still remain the best representative assembly in the world. It is an absolute reversal of our whole scheme of municipalising education, and it would be a lasting blot on that wise, liberal, and democratic policy. These are the essential objections to an *ad hoc* body. I frankly own that there is an incidental objection which is of more importance to my mind than that to which I have referred in the history I have given of the National Union's connection with elections. That objection is that it would place elections in the hands of an organisation which would control them with a grip of iron, an organisation outside of this House and outside of the electorate, and whose influence would, I believe, be diametrically opposed to the free and independent use of the franchise. I think that we may dismiss an *ad hoc* body from our consideration, and we may come to the real question at issue in this discussion—the question of the representation of the Borough Councils upon the consultative Committee.

Admitting that the London County Council is to be the education authority, the arguments that have been used by the Members of this House with regard to overloading the work, not only of the School Board but of the London County Council, are arguments in favour of a large and drastic scheme of delegation. The question was to what body that delegation was to take place, and the Government selected, as an element of that consultative body, a certain number of borough councillors. I may say at once I heartily support the Government in that proposal, and I hope they will stick to it. I sympathise with the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Education in the position in which he finds himself. Cannon to right of him, cannon to left of him, cannon in front of him, and cannon, alas, behind him from those faithful Benches. I alone, with one or two others, stand in the deadly breach upholding the banner of the Borough Councils, which he has so boldly run up to the masthead, and which I earnestly hope he will not as quickly pull down. If I may venture to give any counsel to the hon. Gentleman, and even to the Government, in this matter, I would, speaking from personal experience, advise them to disregard the chilly silence of some of their supporters, and the open antagonism of others, and to pursue their course, relying on the strength of their own conscience and the goodness of their cause, and that in the end will secure a satisfactory measure of reform. I support the borough councillors as an element in this Bill because not only is it consistent with the whole policy of the Government in regard to local government in London, but because I believe it will secure a body of men eminently fitted for the functions to be performed. Largeness in the area of selection invariably means better quality in the selected; and it must be remembered that these thirty-one members of the Borough Councils will be selected for their fitness for the special duty from nearly 1,800 men who are engaged in the functions of local government in the Metropolis, whereas the thirty-six county councillors will only be selected from a body of 137. I do not want to draw a comparison of fitness between the two, but as the question as between the London County Council and the Borough Councils has become a most prominent one in this discussion, I wish to say a few words about it. The hon. Member for Battersea and his friends are always complaining of what they call the process of "baiting the County Council" which is carried on in this House. There is no baiting of the County Council here. There are many of us on this side of the House opposed to what we consider the illegitimate ambition of certain members of the County Council—an ambition born, we believe, in its early absorption in party politics—to make itself an *imperium in imperio* in our system of government, by extending what we think the unhealthy principle of municipal trading, by getting the control of a vast number of employees whose votes would follow those who advocate such a policy, and, as we saw on a recent occasion, by claiming that the decision of the London County Council should be superior to, or at least slavishly followed by, this House in a matter which the theory and practice of our legislation has left to the final arbitrament of Parliament. That is the policy that is pursued by some Members on behalf of the London County Council, and one to which some on this side of the House are directly opposed. If we descend to talk about "baiting" I say anything of that sort done in this House is not comparable to the persistent campaign of contempt and belittling which many hon. Members opposite and their leaders have pursued towards the members of the Borough Councils and the Borough Councils themselves. These expressions never found more unmistakable form than in the discussions on this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said sneeringly of the borough councillors "in this connection they are elected for the cleansing and lighting of streets, and the provision of baths and wash-houses."

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Why not?

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: That presumably is all their work.

MR. LOUGH: It is their chief work.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: And the right hon. Gentleman went on to say, speaking of the management of schools being entrusted to them, "it would be in the hands of bodies who had no pretence of fitness to discharge those duties."

Mr. LOUGH: Hear, hear!

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: Exactly. And the right hon. Member for Tower Hamlets pursued the same line, stating "they are elected for sanitation," *i.e.*, for sanitation only, while the hon. Member for Battersea stated——

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I did not make any remark.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: Perhaps the hon. Member will wait until I have finished the sentence. He stated that "the borough councillor, by virtue of his position, is incapable of doing educational work."

Mr. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear!

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: I greatly resent these imputations, and I venture to call the attention of those who are really interested in democratic principles to this contemptuous attitude towards the elected representatives of the people in that phase of local government where the real representative principle assumes its truest form, and where the responsibility of the elected to the electors is more direct, because it is closer at hand than in any other body. Why all this contempt for the Borough Councils? The reason is not far to seek. Hon. Members opposite have captured the London County Council, but they have not succeeded yet in capturing the Borough Councils, and although, for the reasons I have stated, I believe the Borough Councils are really more democratic in their constitution than the County Council, when they are given an important share in local government like representation on the Water Board or the Port of London, or, as in this Bill, on the Education Committee, it is called de-democratising our local government institutions because the particular form of democracy which hon. Gentlemen opposite prefer, because they can manipulate it, does not exist in these bodies. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said the Borough Councils had no mandate on education. What mandate has the London County Council on education? It is quite true it is the rating authority for education, but does anyone suppose, when a man goes to the poll in support of a particular candidate for the London County Council, he votes for him on education? When the London County Council becomes the educational authority the mandate will come, and when the Borough Councils participate in this work the mandate will come to them also.

*Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): The London County Council is now an education authority under the Technical Education Acts.

Mr. LOUGH: And has been for these twelve years.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: I am not talking about Technical Education. I know about that, and the admirable way in which the County Council has conducted it. But I am speaking of primary education. The suggestion of the hon. Member who interrupted me, was that an appreciable portion of the electors when they go to the poll vote for the London County Council as an education authority. I am afraid I cannot accept that suggestion. Of course, as I have said, when the Borough Councils become the education authority they will have their mandate, and therefore the argument which suggests they have no mandate now is worthless. I advocate strongly the inclusion of the Borough Councils on this Education Board, because we must have a large measure of delegation, and we must have a body composed of practical, sensible, and business men to whom that delegation must go. I advocate the Borough Councils because I do not believe in all this talk about friction; or that when these Borough Councils are on this Committee it will become a Committee which the London County Council will not trust. I believe when these men get to work they will do that work practically, conscientiously, and well I do not believe there will be a large amount of Party politics introduced into the body, or that there will be any opportunity for them, but if there are

Party politics on the Board, then I say it is healthy and consistent with our institutions that there should be more than one Party. If, on the other hand, there are no Party politics, then there is little in all this talk about friction. I advocate their inclusion because I do not agree with the idea that it will interfere with the London County Council being the education authority. As has been pointed out, it has on this Committee thirty-six members of its own and thirty-one other members which it appoints, making sixty-seven members in all out of ninety-two, but I do not think so much of that. I ask the House to consider what are the relations between the London County Council and the Consultative Committee set up under this Bill. The London County Council retains all power of the purse. I believe it must delegate to the Committee educational matters, except in case of urgency. In case of urgency the County Council, the education authority, can proceed without referring matters to the Committee. When it has referred matters to the Committee, the Committee reports to the London County Council, who can tear up the report and take no heed of it. With those powers and, in addition, the power of the purse, it is absurd to say that the London County Council is not virtually and practically the education authority under this Bill. I urge the inclusion of the Borough Councils, because, while I admit the difference between the functions of the London County Council and the Borough Councils, those functions are co-ordinate. The County Council takes matters common to the whole Metropolis, and the Borough Councils take matters which are local. What can be more local than education ? The only point of view from which it must be regarded as common is with regard to uniformity, and that is secured by the provisions of the Bill. All I claim is that these Borough Councils should have their share in establishing that uniformity of the general system. Lastly, I claim that the Borough Councils should be included because it is eminently consistent with the whole policy which His Majesty's Ministers have pursued with regard to local government in London. I remember in the discussion on the Local Government Act of 1899 calling attention to the fact that a stranger coming to England, the country which has given to the world the form and spirit of the Parliamentary method, its responsibility, and its representative principle, when he examined the conditions in London, found that the representative principle was almost non-existent in the groundwork of local government. No one voted at the vestry elections. It was to remove that reproach and to revitalise the representative principle at the base of the system, that the Government policy was directed. The only way they could do it was by enlarging or consolidating the area of the unit, but still more by raising the dignity and adding to the importance of these local authorities. They have pursued that policy consistently, as instanced by the Water Board and the Port of London authority. But here, in a matter much nearer to them, the education of the children within their area, it is proposed to give these authorities a blow in the face and deprive them of any share in the central governing authority in this matter. If that is done I think it will arrest the flow of that new and larger life which it has been our policy to give to the popular aspirations for self-government in this great city.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): The hon. Member who has just sat down has argued this question as if it were a political quarrel between the party which has the majority in the London County Council and the party which is in the majority on the Borough Councils. That is an extraordinary point of view for a London Member to take, a Member who is supposed to be watching, and to understand, the enormous and vital issues involved in this Bill.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: The right hon. Gentleman must remember I founded that argument upon expressions used on his own side.

MR. BRYCE: Those expressions have been inaccurately stated, and as strongly misapprehended as the inferences the hon. Gentleman himself has drawn.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: I quoted.

MR. BRYCE: He has not understood what has been said by my hon. friend the Member for Camberwell, and he certainly misunderstood the attitude which has been taken up by most of us with regard to this question. I personally, and so far as I know, the enormous majority of those who belong to the Liberal Party, have always desired the continuous maintenance of a directly elected educational authority, and neither the National Union, nor Dr. Clifford, nor anybody else has had anything to do with our forming that opinion. This Bill presents itself in two aspects; it is a Bill which incorporates by its first clause the provisions, subject to modifications which are extremely difficult to follow, and which will cause the greatest possible trouble in future, of the Act of last year. It also creates a new authority for London. It creates that authority on the lines laid down in the Act of last year, but makes important variations which, so far as I can see, make the Bill far worse.

This Bill applies the Act of 1902 to a population of 4,500,000—one-seventh of the people of England, and half what our entire population was a century ago. London is a city, but in administration and in resource it is a nation, and this is really a Bill to apply the Education Act of last year, with all its far-reaching principles, to a nation of 4,500,000 of people, a population rapidly increasing, and more than the whole people of England two or three centuries ago. Therefore, the application of these principles must be a matter of grave concern. What was it the Act of last year did? It destroyed, or at any rate postponed, the prospect of having a really organic and harmonious system of national education. It roused and strengthened sectarianism. It established, for the first time, tests in public elementary schools, because the schools had not beforehand been public elementary schools in the same sense as when supported by the rates. Lastly, it refused the people the right of managing schools which, as ratepayers, they are called upon to support. All this is entirely opposed to the principles of free, popular government and religious equality. I am not going to repeat the arguments used last year, but it is necessary to reiterate the statement. All that we said last year about the pernicious principles embodied in that Act we adhere to now, and we intend to maintain the contest on the lines on which it was then begun. We cannot see these principles, which we believe to be both novel and dangerous, applied to London without renewing our protest against them. The question raised last year was not settled; it still awaits the decision of the country, and the country will have to express its opinion upon it at the next General Election. The feeling then evoked in the country is now being evoked in London, and, if there were nothing else in the Bill to which we could take objection, we should feel bound to vote against it on Clause 1, which applies to London the principles of the Act of 1902.

I come now to the parts of the Bill which are special and peculiar to London. The Secretary to the Board of Education commented last night on the extreme quietude of the debate. That was not owing to any want of strong feeling; it was largely due to a singular feature of the debate, viz., the remarkable unanimity on both sides. To that unanimity the only exception was the Front Bench opposite. From all the rest of the House, without exception—

The PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, W.): The hon. Member for Hampstead.

MR. BRYCE: I did not hear the speech of the hon. Member, but from what I hear he was no exception to what I was about to say. Every speech I heard contained grave reservations, and expressed strong disapproval of some provisions of the Bill, particularly with regard to the Borough Councils. Even such staunch members of the old guard as the hon. Members for Limehouse and Peckham condemned the part of the Bill relating to Borough Councils.

MR. WALTER LONG: The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken. The hon. Member for Limehouse and the hon. Member for Hampstead both supported, in the most express terms, the proposals with regard to the Metropolitan Boroughs, and supported them by argument.

MR. BRYCE: I certainly understood the hon. Member for Limehouse to disapprove of the large proportion on the Education Committee given to the Borough Councils.

Mr. HARRY SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman entirely misunderstood me. I pleaded most strongly for the retention of the representation of the Borough Councils, but I said I had no objection to more county councillors being added.

Mr. BRYCE: That at once clears up the matter, because that certainly is not the Bill; therefore the hon. Member for Limehouse joins in the disapproval of the measure?

Mr. HARRY SAMUEL: I said I had no objection.

Mr. BRYCE: I understood the hon. Member to imply that he thought the Bill would be a better Bill if the County Council had a larger representation.

Mr. HARRY SAMUEL: No. Personally I would give the Borough Councils an absolute majority.

Mr. BRYCE: Well, I will give the Government the benefit of the hon. Member as an adherent. The House will at any rate agree that there has been a remarkable demonstration of disapproval of one of the most important provisions of the Bill from the Government's own side. Adding to that fact the language of the Prime Minister, it appears to me that the House is now debating, not the Bill before us, but a possible Bill which has yet to emerge from the Committee. The Prime Minister, in a vague and guarded speech, endeavoured to minimise the Bill, to confine it to certain leading principles, and to express those principles in such a way as to make it possible in Committee to say that the present provisions for the constitution of the Education Committee, and the arrangement of the management, are not essential parts of the Bill, thereby enabling his followers to vote for the Bill, while retaining the objections which they had so candidly expressed. But he did not tell us what was proposed to be substituted; consequently I am obliged to deal with the Bill as it stands, and to ask how it would work if passed into law. I cannot be surprised at the reception of the Bill when I look at the authority the Government propose to set up. It is absolutely bewildering. What are the facts of the case? You have a system which has been working well, and improving as time went on, for thirty-three years. The friction and controversy which marked its earlier years have almost entirely disappeared. No charge is now brought against it. The excellence of its work is admitted, and the excellence of that part of its work which might be supposed to be open to criticism—the conduct of religious education—has been praised by Prelates of the Church of England itself. Since this question was raised no charge has been brought against the efficiency, zeal, or wisdom with which the School Board has done its work. It has enlisted very capable men; it has grappled with the enormous problem of covering London with schools; it has worked up the quality of education; in the case of evening schools, in its zeal, it has even exceeded the limits of the law; and it has organised a system which has obtained the approval of the people. Reference has been made to the small number who vote at the School Board elections. One obvious explanation of that circumstance is the size of the School Board areas. A man takes comparatively little interest in a matter which does not come directly home to him, and in regard to which he is only one of 50,000 or 60,000 electors. I believe you would get far heavier polls with smaller School Board areas. But, apart from that, I believe another explanation of the smallness of the School Board polls is that there has been on the part of the ratepayers a general acquiescence in the policy of the Board. When no large issues are before the electors they have not the same inducement to record their votes. The policy of the School Board has been established on such firm and beneficent lines that public opinion in London has been well content with it, and hence the small polls at the elections.

This body, which for thirty-three years has worked so well, is to be overthrown. Nobody can deny that that is the object of the Bill. Instead of the present simple and efficient system we are to have one so confused that it is hard to discern even its outlines. It seem to be an inextricable mixture of County Council, Education

Committees, Borough Councils, Borough Council Committees, voluntary managers, and the Board of Education—of authorities which cross and recross one another, and which are so interlaced that it is hard to comprehend how the system can work at all. It combines the maximum of complexity with the minimum of cohesion. What motives can have induced the Government to destroy a system which was working so well, in order to substitute for it a system so complex and unknown? Presumably the Government are desirous of improving the education of London; therefore I have tried to find some explanation of the singular policy they have adopted. The object of the Bill last year was to give voluntary schools support out of the rates, but that could have been done in this Bill without abolishing the School Board. There was nothing to prevent the Government throwing upon the School Board for London the duty of supporting the voluntary schools exactly in the same way as the Board schools. There has never been wanting on the School Boards men quite capable of standing up for the denominational interest, and it would have been easy to lay statutory obligations upon the School Board in this respect. Even the Progressive members of the School Board would have been willing to carry out whatever the Legislature laid upon them with regard to supporting voluntary schools. What is the other point? Consistency would seem to suggest that the precedent of last year should be followed, and that the body created should be the County Council or a Committee created upon the same lines as the County or Borough Council Education Committees of last year. But the Government have another pet aversion besides the School Board, namely, the London County Council. The County Council has been placed in a minority upon this Committee and its hands have been tied, partly through its relation to the managers, and partly through the magnitude of the work that will devolve upon it. I cannot see how it is possible for the County Council to fulfil these duties. This crude, clumsy, and chaotic scheme has all the faults of the Bill of 1902 in addition to new faults of its own. Those faults seem to me to be that the Bill does not recognise the unity of London, does not recognise popular control, and it does nothing for efficiency and economy. The prominent feature which distinguishes this Bill from the Bill of last year is the bringing in of the Borough Councils. I have not a word to say against the Borough Councils in their own proper scope and sphere, and I entirely deny that there is any prejudice against the Borough Councils in our mind. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh! oh!"] At any rate I am not aware of any such sentiment. I will say nothing about the Borough Councils except that they are an artificial creation, and not living entities like the other Boroughs, and they are not the kind of thing we understand by the term "Boroughs," when we think of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, or Sheffield. Those places are living municipal organs, but these London boroughs are not. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why not?"] Because they are so different in their conditions, and the boundaries which divide them are not natural boundaries.

MR. WALTER LONG: That does not apply to Manchester and Salford.

MR. BRYCE: I think it would be a great deal better for Manchester and Salford if they were united, for they went to very large expense in founding two enormous technical institutions, and the money would have been infinitely better spent in establishing one institution. Consequently, the very instance which the right hon. Gentleman suggests is an instance against his argument. Take Marylebone and Paddington. You can tell the limits of these places, but how can you get any local patriotism there? [AN HON. MEMBER: "We do."] You might as well throb with local patriotism in the Edgware Road. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why not?"] Because these boroughs are artificial creations, and I am surprised that there is any difference of opinion upon this subject. I thought the sentiment of every Londoner was that he would like to know more about his borough, but he has no opportunity of doing so. When a voting paper for a London borough is brought round, there are probably not more than one or two names upon the list which are known to us. This is not owing to want of interest on our part, but it is due to the fact that there is very little known about what are called London boroughs, which are artificial divisions and not boroughs in the sense in which the great boroughs of England are municipal boroughs. That is the reason why I think they are not suitable to have educational functions delegated to them, and why they are not suitable to be brought in here as bodies which are intended to make up the central education authority for London. It was never intended when they were created that they should perform educational functions, and they are not fitted by their membership to undertake them. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Why?"] Because it was never thought of when the Borough Councils were elected. I will tell hon. Members why I do not think they can be chosen for educational purposes. One reason is that in the Government scheme only thirty-one out of 1,500 borough councillors can go upon the education authority. Under these circumstances how can it be present to the mind of the elector when he votes that he is choosing a proportion of 1,500 divided by thirty-one. It is an absurd suggestion, where only thirty-one out of 1,500 are to be put on the education authority, and where the interest in education will be so small, to contend that education can play any part in a Borough Council election. The thing is impossible on the face of it, and I fail to see how it can be alleged that the Borough Councils are in any way suitable bodies to be brought into the work of education at all as a part of the education authority or as managers. The precedent of the Water Board has been mentioned, but in that case it may be said that it was necessary to bring in external authorities, and it was a new thing. Therefore there might be a case for bringing in the Borough Councils, but where you have an authority working well, and where you have an existing authority in the County Council, discharging educational functions already in regard to technical education, the case that can be made out in the instance of the Water Board falls altogether. The Prime Minister in bringing in his Borough Councils Bill in 1899 said—

> "The change which took place when the County Council of London was created was so much in consonance with the traditions of English municipal Government that it is likely to be permanent, and whether it works ill or well, it is likely for all time to represent the central body dealing with those matters in which all the parts of the Metropolis are alike interested, and which cannot be dealt with piecemeal by the various subordinated local authorities which rule over the smaller areas."

These words appear to find a direct and practical application to the subject of education. Education seems to me to be one of the things which fall within the terms laid down by the right hon. Gentleman. This concerns the whole of London and all parts of London alike and similarly, and it cannot be dealt with piecemeal by the various subordinated local authorities. This is a matter which belongs to the central authority, and you will gain nothing whatever by bringing in borough councillors either as committeemen or managers and you are bound to injure the general education of London.

Now I come to my second point, which is popular control. Allow me to make it perfectly plain that I do not want to deal with this question in any doctrinaire or democratic spirit. I do not care whether it is democratic or not, or whether it conforms to any particular form. I desire only to look at the essence of the thing we have to consider, namely, how best we can secure the interest, the co-operation and the help of the people of London in the work of education. We want to secure sympathy with the teacher and the worker alike, we want to enlist their thoughts and wishes, and their practical co-operation. We want them to move education forward and secure a means of bringing the defects of system before the responsible authority, of having improvements introduced and we want to fix the responsibility. We want to have a body to whom praise or blame can be awarded according as the management works well or ill. We want a body which can be voted into office, or out of office, just as they meet the desires of the electors. Those principles are the very foundation of British self-government. I ask the House to bear those principles in mind, and to consider why they should be applied to education in London. Why should they not? Education needs popular interest and sympathy at least quite as much as any other part of our administration. I am not sure that it does not need it more than any other, because the results of education are less palpable to the ordinary citizen than those things which concern the rest of his external life. The ordinary man does not so fully realise what the benefit of the education of his child is, as he realises the paving of streets or the draining of houses. At the same time the benefits education can confer are even greater than those conferred by the other work of the local authority. Therefore you have the strongest possible case for applying the principles which are to secure popular co-operation, and to enforce responsibility in the work of education I look to this Bill to see for what it proposes as a means of securing co-operation, and for enforcing responsibility. Where do I find it? I do not find the means in the County Council, because the County Council cannot possibly be responsible for all the details, for a tenth or hundredth part of the details, of educational work which has to be done in London. It must go to the Committee, and it is impossible for the County Council adequately to supervise the work which has to be done by its Educational Committee. Neither can I find this responsibility in the Committee, because in the Committee the elected members of the County Council, the only body in which the responsibility can be vested—are in a minority, and therefore there is no responsibility. Still less do I find it in the borough councillors, numbering thirty-one and drawn from 1,500 members scattered over London. Least of all can I find it in the co-opted members. In no part of the Bill can you find that anyone can be made responsible or amenable to the public interest. The body will be far from the people, and will not be in touch with the people at all. If there be questions of educational policy to be determined, there will be no means of submitting these questions to the people. You cannot have an election of Borough Councils on educational questions. Even at the election of the County Council there are hundreds of other matters, and it is impossible to segregate educational questions and take the opinion of the people on them. Therefore, I am obliged to come to the conclusion that, as far as London is concerned this principle of popular control is entirely ignored.

I come now to the question of efficiency. What prospect have you of efficient and, above all, of economical administration? Here is an enormous mass of work, which has occupied hitherto a body which has had nothing else to do, and which has been obliged to do the work through a number of Committees appointed for particular parts of the School Board functions. Now you propose to throw it on a new body which is already as fully occupied as it can be in the discharge of it's functions. I heard the answer made to that by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. He said that Parliament has a great many functions—that Parliament has much more multifarious work to discharge than the County Council, and yet Parliament discharges that work. I think I have heard the right hon. Gentleman say something to the effect that Parliament did not discharge the work, but I think we are all agreed that Parliament has become less and less equal to the work it has to discharge. The right hon. Gentleman asked if Parliament is able to discharge work so various why should not the County Council? Well, the fundamental difference is this. Parliament is not an administrative body. Parliament does not and cannot undertake——

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I mentioned Parliament, but perhaps even a stronger and more pertinent case is that of every Borough Council in the Kingdom. They are not elected *ad hoc.*

MR. BRYCE: Every Borough Council in the Kingdom has enormous work to do, and one of the objections we take to the Bill is that the borough councillors are elected to do municipal work—having lighting, draining, police, and work of that kind—and now technical education has been added. But strictly speaking, with the exception of technical education, municipal work is all work *ejusdem generis*, and the very objection we took to the Bill of last year was that you were proposing to give to these borough councillors an immense amount of additional work which I do not believe they will be able properly to discharge. We said that last year, and we adhere to that opinion now. I entirely deny that the right hon. Gentleman has answered my argument. As regards Parliament I must repeat that it is not an administrative body. Its duty is to look after administration, whereas the County Council and the Borough Council have to themselves administer. Why does not the Local Government Board try to throw the Poor-Law work on the municipalities? That work is a great deal more nearly connected with the municipal work they have to do, than the work of education. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well that they would not have the time and capacity to undertake that work in addition to that they already discharge But we have the most conclusive proof of the argument I am endeavouring to advance in the action of the County Council itself. I suppose if there ever was a body which, even in the estimation of its enemies, is not wanting in activity, energy, and self-confidence, and in the desire to increase its own jurisdiction, that body is the London County Council. Therefore it might fairly be supposed that the London County Council would welcome the great addition to its powers which the Government proposes to give it. But what happened yesterday? The County Council had a debate on this subject, and by a majority of four to one it expressed its opinion that it was not able, had not time, and had not the capacity to undertake the additional work of London education. By a further vote of four to one—sixty-four to sixteen —it expressed its opinion that London education ought to be given to a body directly elected for the purpose. Well, I think the County Council may fairly be admitted to know its own strength and weakness, and if we find an ambitious body like that, declining work because it believes it has not the time, the capacity, and the special knowledge to undertake it, I should have thought that the House would hesitate before throwing this enormous additional burden on the County Council. That argument which I have used with regard to the County Council itself applies with almost equal force to the Committee of the County Council, because members of the County Council will be placed on the Committee, while they have the ordinary County Council work to discharge. It is not proposed to absolve them from that work. They are still, like other County Councillors, responsible for the general policy of the County Council. They cannot wash their hands of it. They, as members of the Education Committee, will not be able to undertake this work.

Here is another point. You have had for the last thirty-three years an extremely valuable element upon the School Board in the presence of women. They have had very often more time than most men can give to the work. They have had that power of patiently investigating a case which specially belongs to women. They have been among the most assiduous and useful members of the School Board, and I believe every member of the Board will bear witness that they have been particularly valuable in dealing with school mistresses, who form so large a part of the educational staff. Therefore the loss of the services of women is a serious loss in regard to educational affairs. I have been told that they may come in as co-opted members, but that power is a very different thing from coming in with the authority of popular election behind them. There are, after all, only twenty-five co-opted members on the Education Committee, and out of these provision is to be made of various kinds, and few indeed will be the places that can possibly be left to be filled by women. It seems to me one of the greatest drawbacks of the scheme is that it is impossible to elect women, or to make provision for their proper representation.

The question of efficiency suggests another point. What are the relations which are to be established between the education authority and the school managers? The term managers is used here with regard to the borough councillors, but what is meant by managers? Managers, as hitherto understood with regard to elementary schools, are people who are on the spot, people who are attached to one or two particular schools, who know the needs and wants of those schools, are able to give frequent visits to the schools and to associate themselves directly with the work. The borough councillors are not a suitable body to be managers of schools. Therefore I do not feel that those who framed this Bill have had in their minds a vivid picture of what actual managerial work is when they allotted the work of managers to the borough councillors. There are at present about 1,750 school managers in London, and about one-third of them are women, and, speaking broadly, the knowledge and experience of those women will be lost. It is possible, of course, that some of them may be appointed to the managing committees, but there is not the slightest certainty or guarantee for this, and the chances are that the great majority of them will be lost to the work. It has been a feature of the present School Board system—probably it is not known to many Members of the House—that every member of the School Board is bound to be a manager of some particular school. As a manager of that Board school he acquires a direct and immediate knowledge of the working of the school. He knows the relations between the managers and the Board, and the managers and the teachers, in a way which nothing but experience can enable them to do. You cannot do that under this system. You cannot ask members of the Education Committee, and particularly those who are members of the County Council, to add to all their other work the work of managers of Board schools. You cannot do that with the provided schools, because they are already taken out of their control and put under the control of the Borough Councils. In that way you lose what has been an extremely valuable element in the work of the present School Board, namely, the direct knowledge that they have of the working of particular schools. That is one of the incidental results—I have no doubt it is intended by the Government—of the proposal to bring in members of the Borough Council as managers of schools.

When I think of the reality of these questions, when I think of what the actual management of schools is, and what work has to be done, I am inclined to ask myself whether the First Lord of the Treasury is not living in a world of abstractions. He is a metaphysician. There was a great school of philosophers who bore the name of Nominalists. The right hon. Gentleman may, I think, be described as a Nominalist. He lives in a world of names. He talks of decentralisation and delegation of management as if these phrases represent real things, whereas they are only so many names, only mere abstracts that blow hither and thither across the horizon of his mind, but which do not correspond with the actual and concrete facts of the case. If the right hon. Gentleman had realised as a manager or as a member of a School Board what the actual and concrete facts of the case were, I do not think he would have proposed to make the Borough Councils managers of the schools. Recollect that they will not be members in the sense of the Act of last year. Under that Act the managers in the provided schools were entirely under the control of the local education authority. Under this Bill that is not the case. In regard to the provided schools, the management is taken out of the hands of the education authority. As a point of fact, the local education authority has less control over the provided schools than over the non-provided schools. That is an extraordinary anomaly for which no argument has been advanced. The power to appoint and dismiss teachers should be left to the central authority. The results of vesting that power in the London School Board had been admirable. It enabled the Board to give a stimulus to educational work all through the London staff. Masters and mistresses had done excellent work with the prospect of promotion; and they got promotion from one school or district to another. That cannot be done under the system proposed by the Government, because the patronage is taken out of the hands of the central authority and given to the Borough Councils. The provision which gives the Borough Councils the power to select sites for schools is also open to objection. The question of sites is, above all, a question which should be considered by the central authority, not in the interests of a particular locality, but of the whole area which the school will serve. I gather, however, that the control and management of the buildings, and probably the freehold, will be with the Borough Councils.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: No.

MR. BRYCE: In that case I hope the matter will be explained, for the Bill is obscure, at any rate ambiguous. Nothing is said to imply that the ownership is to be in the central authority. The School Board of London has cultivated for many years past what is called a management code. That code has been by degrees hammered by different Committees into a very useful and workable document. Now there is no certainty that that management code will be adopted by the Borough Councils. The Borough Councils are at liberty to put it aside altogether, or only to adopt certain sections of it.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: There are the general directions.

MR. BRYCE: I do not think that general directions will cover the matter, but I am glad to hear from the hon. Gentleman that they do. I am, however, sure that that is not clear on the face of the Bill, and that in that respect the Bill is capable of amendment. The one solitary practical argument which has been used in favour of the municipalisation of education has been the argument that you ought to have one rating authority. I agree with the force of that argument but I do not see in this Bill any guarantee of economy. The transfer of anything from one body to another has always been attended by an increased expenditure, and here you get the impossibility of the London County Council, which is to be the rating authority, adequately controlling these Committees, and the impossibility of the Committees adequately controlling the spending managers. With this difficulty of imposing financial control there will be the temptation which will naturally, humanly speaking, lie upon the boroughs to spend lavishly out of a fund which will not fall directly on them but on the general rate of London. In the absence of any motive for economy I expect a greatly increased expenditure. I find nothing in the powers of the London County Council to enable them to properly control and curtail expenditure. Therefore, apart altogether from the expenditure which will be involved in respect of the voluntary schools, I am afraid that these and other changes in the Bill will increase the rates of London and make education more costly than hitherto. I confess I was not able to follow my hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education when he spoke of all the advantages that would flow from what he called delegation to the Borough Councils. The only tangible point I could catch was that the boroughs would be disposed to require, or exact, less from the teachers and therefore lower the standard of efficiency of education. My hon. friend did not use these words, but I am afraid that if you exact less from the teachers you will lower the standard of efficiency.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: What I said was that they would have more independence in the regulation of the teaching.

MR. BRYCE: If that is so I cannot possibly see how that is to be secured by the change made. I cannot see how that is to be so under the Borough Councils, who at present have no experience at all of the elementary schools in London. I confess that from whatever point I regard this Bill, and I really do not want to regard it from any but an educational point of view, I am not able to find that it secures either popular co-operation, popular control, or responsibility, economy, efficiency or progress in education. The longer I think of this scheme, and the more I hear about it from all quarters of the House, I am convinced that, whatever your wishes may be, whatever the plans with which you set out, you will be driven in the long run to have a special authority for education in London. That authority may be elected at the same time as the London County Council, or the London County Council may be provided with additional members elected for the particular purpose. That was a plan which was in my mind last year. But one way or another you will not be able to acquiesce in this scheme, but will be driven to find a body which has the time, the knowledge, and the ability to cope with this question properly. I would really appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, who has shown on occasion that he appreciates how entirely different the problem in London is from that in other communities—although he sometimes brings that difference on one side of his argument and sometimes on the other—and say to him: Is it not wilful blindness, is it not perverseness to ignore the patent facts which make

London so entirely different from other cases, and which makes a blind following of consistency the very worst policy that can be adopted in a matter of this kind ? I confess that I was perfectly astonished to find, when this Bill was brought in, a nominally Conservative Government proposing to abolish one institution in order to substitute for it another of far less promise. That is not the course usually followed by that Party. It shows how much the Conservative Party has changed since the days of Sir Robert Peel when it attempts to make it its business to destroy institutions which have worked so well. I have endeavoured to keep clear of passion. Certainly we have the advantage that the element of religious controversy in regard to the educational problems of London has been entirely eliminated from our view. I have looked at the needs of London, and the facts of the case as a citizen of London ought to know them. I do recognise one great benefit in the Bill. It gives wider powers of rating for the purposes of higher education. I desire to acknowledge that in the amplest way, and I earnestly hope that these powers will be used for higher and technical education. I believe it will be for the real benefit of all classes—for the London poor as well as for the well-to-do—that higher and even University education should be made available within its borders, and I believe that the rates might be properly used for such a purpose, although whether these powers will be liberally used I have some little apprehension. But apart from that benefit, which I do discover in the Bill, but which might have been introduced into a Bill of other features than those to which I object, I am sorry to say that I object to the phrases "decentralisation" and "delegation," to which there is nothing to correspond, and which confer no solid benefit. I should be disappointed indeed in regard to the future of education in London if I did not feel assured that the essential and fundamental defects of the scheme which is now before us—a scheme which already in some of its vital features has been condemned by public opinion, and which I believe will be more and more exposed if it ever comes to be applied in practice —if I did not feel sure that these defects are such that the Measure cannot possibly stand, and that we shall soon be called upon to make, in a very different spirit from that which the Ministry have shown in the Bill, a serious and earnest effort to make the education of the children of London, both higher and elementary, worthy of the population and resources of the capital of the British Empire.

MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.): The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken attacked the Borough Councils on the ground that they are really artificial bodies. In certain cases that is true; but in certain other cases it is not true. Some of the Borough Councils have a distinct vitality and energy of their own. The argument is, however, a rather unfortunate one for the right hon. Gentleman to have used. He did not seem to be aware of the fact that the London County Council itself is an absolutely artificial body. There is the Metropolitan Police Area, Water London, and the Administrative County of London; and there is no earthly reason why Woolwich, on the south side of the river, should be included in London while West Ham on the north side is excluded. I regret very much that the Opposition have thought fit to take their stand purely on the negative in this matter, and should have adopted the principle of an *ad hoc* authority for London. I should have thought that, as the *ad hoc* principle had been given up with reference to the rest of England, hon. Gentlemen opposite would not have thought it necessary to introduce it in connection with London. I hope that when this Bill is passed we shall be able to do away with the necessity of having special bodies dealing with special work If we really wish to have separate bodies to deal with special work in connection with local government, there are many subjects, such as asylums, which might be made the subject of special bodies, in preference to education in which a general knowledge of affairs comes so largely into play. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Camberwell, in a very interesting speech, which I suppose is his swan song, as he is about to be destroyed as a member of the School Board, gave us a long account of the labours in which the School Board were engaged. In fact the hon. Gentleman drew such a tremendous picture of the labours of the School Board, that he almost overdid the case. He compared the Boards in Scotland and Wales with the one Board dealing with education in London, the population being about equal; but his argument cuts both ways. It would be as impossible for any special body in London to deal with the whole of the education of London as it would be for the County Council itself, without adding a certain number of members to that body. The question has assumed a very different aspect since the speech of the Prime Minister, because many of the objections which many of us felt to the Bill as it was introduced, have been to a great extent removed by that speech. The Prime Minister indicated that on such important details as the representation of the Borough Councils on the central board, and the proportion of representation to be given to the County Council he had an open mind; and it is not too much to assume that if he has an open mind on these matters, the Secretary for the Board of Education has also an open mind regarding them. We have several types of bodies in London. We have the Water Board, on which the London County Council has a certain representation; but the Water Board raises its own rate and spends it. The School Board spends the money although it does not raise the rate, but it can command another body to raise it. In this case, we are going to have a body to manage education which cannot itself raise the rate, and which cannot demand that another body shall raise it. It will have to consult with a small section of its own number as to whether or not a proposed rate will prove acceptable to the rating body—the London County Council. The Secretary to the Board of Education, when he was speaking of the proportion of representation which the London County Council would have on this Board, said he considered that the thirty-six members of the Council would have great influence, because the remaining sixty-one members would be consulting them as to the kind of educational course that would be pleasing to the parent body. They would be regarded as beings from a superior sphere, charged with a knowledge of what the parent body wished, and all the other members on the Board would be in the nature of a consultative body.

I think this matter ought to be considered not only from the point of view of the members of the Board, but also from the point of view of the London County Council itself. As the Secretary to the Board of Education has stated, it is of the utmost importance that we should establish absolute sympathy between the Board and the London County Council. It is difficult to see how that sympathy can be established as the Bill stands, because, in order to make this Bill thoroughly workable, we have got to persuade the County Council to give the fullest confidence to this Board, and to delegate to it as many of its duties, consultative and executive, as they possibly can. You surely cannot do that if the London County Council feels that it is represented on the Board only by a small minority. The hon. Member for North Camberwell, speaking of the President of the Technical Education Committee of the London County Council, mentioned the fact that in several committees there was a majority of non-elected members. That is perfectly true; but these committees are sub-committees; and they know perfectly well that they must report to the Technical Education Committee before their report is submitted to the London County Council. Therefore the Technical Education Committee in that case perform duties which might otherwise be thrown on the London County Council. The Prime Minister indicated that he would be quite ready to increase the representation of the London County Council, and if the number representing the London County Council is increased, I hope the Prime Minister will see fit to remove the representation of the Borough Councils. It has been suggested that it would perhaps have been better to have allowed the London County Council to itself formulate the scheme, rather than that it should be fixed in the Schedule. I cannot help thinking that that would be the better way, because it would secure thorough sympathy between the London County Council and the body which it had itself created; but the Secretary for the Board of Education told us that in that case the representation of the Borough Councils might not perhaps be included. Apparently that was the reason why the formulation of the scheme was not left to the London County Council itself. I should like to say very briefly why I think that it is not necessary that the Borough Councils should have representation on this Board. They are represented on the Water Board; but the argument given for that was that they were the sanitary authority, and, as such, had a certain right to sit on the Water Board. No such argument can be used in this case. We are not taking away from them any kind of authority which they now possess. Up to the present, they have not had anything to do with education in London, and I cannot help thinking that they would value more the power they would get as managers of the provided schools in their own area, rather than the importance they would obtain by sending a single representative to the Education Board. The inclusion of the representatives of the Borough Councils seems to me to strike at the general principle of London government, which lays down, strongly and firmly, that the London County Council is to deal with all matters which affect London generally, and that the Borough Councils are to deal with matters within the purview of their own area.

Again we are told that the London County Council would not be equal to the task. The hon. Member for North Camberwell suggested a way out of that—namely, by increasing the number of county councillors. I do not myself like that way of dealing with the matter; but we have to recognise that London is exceptional, in this sense—that the interests we have to deal with are enormous, and that therefore it may be necessary to have an abnormal number of county councillors to deal with them. My own view is that it will not be necessary at first to increase the number, and that we could economise very largely in the existing number. I express only my own feeling when I say that a Committee of seven or eight members is better than a Committee of fourteen or fifteen members. I say that with all deference to the Cabinet. By reducing the size of the Committee a large number of members would be set free and would be able to devote themselves to the business of London education. I believe also that the London County Council would economise a great deal of its labour by not doing many things it now does by direct labour, and that, in other ways, I believe the Council would be able to set free a large number of members to undertake the work of London education. With reference to the appointment of teachers, all I would say is that the central body ought to have some control over that, as it has over the appointment of head-teachers in non-provided schools. All I wish to secure is that there should be an absolutely free system of promotion for the whole of London, and that the best teachers should be equally diffused. As to the relation of the Borough Councils to the central Board, I should like to make this suggestion—anything that would improve the status of the Borough Councils and improve their interests in local affairs, without militating against the general administration of London, would be of the utmost value. I think it possible that certain difficulties may arise in connection with the sub-committees of the Education Board. If committees of the Borough Councils are to manage groups of schools in their different districts, it will not be to the Borough Council itself, but to its Committee, that the County Council will have the right of nominating a certain number of members. If changes of this kind are made in the Bill, I am convinced it will make for the good of London. The hon. Member for Camberwell, in an eloquent passage, told us of the men and women who had done great service for the education of London on the London School Board, but I feel that the educational resources of London are not confined within the walls of the School Board, and that we shall find persons under the new scheme with no less zeal and no less enthusiasm, and we shall gain many who through the channels of local government can touch education at more numerous points, and I think will be able to bring wider and larger experience to the work of education. That being the case I am very glad that the Party with which I am associated will be itself associated with so broad and vigorous and revivifying a reform.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Before I go into the details of the Bill, I wish to say that if I stand between the House and hon. Members intimately connected with this matter, I must ask the indulgence of the House, because I have been asked to speak for a class whose voice can only be heard through those who sit on these benches. I speak on behalf of the Irish people of this country. Further, I would say that inasmuch as this country assumes to govern Ireland according to her ideas, if at times Irish Members intervene in matters relating to this country Parliament cannot complain. There was a very expressive passage in the speech delivered by the Secretary to the Board of Education last night. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the position of the children of the poor in our public schools. He pictured in a few words how these children often came to the schools hungry, already tired by work they had done, and from squalid homes. I wish I could bring home to the House as clearly as it is in my own mind the position of the Irish people as it is in this country, because the vice of the system from their point of view is this — From circumstances which would be avoidable at home, Irishmen in this country are to a large extent the drudges of the country, doing the hardest and the worst work; they are the poorest of the poor. And this extraordinary thing existed under the Education Acts of this country until modified last year, and it exists in London now, and will till modified by this Bill, that the poorest of the poor are most heavily taxed for education. That is to say, the Irish parent, who is the typical poor parent in this country, has to pay the school rate of the school he is opposed to religiously, and pays the voluntary tax to the school of his own Church. I must say I was surprised that the action of these Irish Catholics in refusing to allow their children to go to the richly-endowed and well-equipped schools of the nation, rather preferring them to go to the tumbledown and badly-equipped schools of their own faith for conscience sake, did not appeal to the reformers of this country. We have 30,000 Irish Roman Catholic children in the schools of London, and 106 elementary schools.

This Bill, like all others, consists of two things, the principle, and the machinery by which the principle is to be carried out. The principle of the Bill is the application of the principle of the Act of last year to London. That principle means that the voluntary schools shall have a right to rate aid, and that being so this Bill contains a principle which neither I nor any man of the Party to which I belong are prepared to give a hostile vote. But when I come to the machinery I must speak with considerable hesitation. It abolishes the School Board, and with it the cumulative vote, and the cumulative vote has been in the past the best protection to the minority of this country, especially the religious minority. It must be remembered that in any observation I make on this matter I represent those who by this Bill are compelled to give up what has been the best method of safeguarding their religious rights. I deplore the fact that the case of the voluntary schools has been brought into collision with the School Board system, and I say that if it had not been for the zealots and extremists on both sides it would have been possible to have made an eirenicon under which the rights of the School Board would have been maintained as well as the rights of the minority. My hon. friend the Member for East Mayo and myself, more than once pointed out in the debates on the Act of last year what an enormous danger to the voluntary school system there was in the Bill of last year, and our fears have been more than realised. The rights of the Roman Catholics will be extirpated under this Bill, as they have been in many parts of the country by the Act of 1902. The effect of this Bill will be to make the last stage of the Roman Catholics worse than ever. Take the position of the large Roman Catholic districts in Lancashire. In Nelson we have three Roman Catholic schools out of a total of thirteen, and we have no representation, though we always had a Roman Catholic on the School Board. At Heywood we have in the schools one-eighth of the children, but there we have no representation. In Bacup representation was refused us, and in Rochdale, although the scheme is not finally approved, there is no provision for Roman Catholic representation, although we know that there is a large Roman Catholic population there. But take the case of Kidderminster, where there was a Roman Catholic on the School Board, there we have no direct representation on the Committee, and a memorial has been sent to the Board of Education on the subject. There has been something said as to intolerance in this matter, but I would remind my hon. friends that all the intolerance is not on one side.

The Board of Education forwarded to the Kidderminster Council a copy of a protest which they had received from Roman Catholics to the Borough Education Scheme, and while not feeling that the nature of the objection was such as to make it necessary to withhold their approval of the Kidderminster scheme, yet hoped the Council would bear in mind the views embodied in the protest. The Mayor was proceeding to read the protest, when Alderman Parry interposed to say that he did not think it was necessary that the letter should be read, as it was out of date, and there was no use reviving a matter now settled. Alderman Pensotti, in agreement, said it seemed as if the authorities were having a bit of fun at the expense of the Council. The letter was not read and no action was taken in the matter. That is the way the remonstrance of the Roman Catholic population of Kidderminster was treated. In Liverpool we have only one Roman Catholic on the Education Committee, and there was a time when we had no fewer than seven members on the School Board. Now we have no more than one on the Committee, thus showing that the abolition of the cumulative vote, instead of being a protection, has really been a disaster, and in Liverpool the Roman Catholic population is one-third of that of the whole of the city. Therefore the experience of the Act of last year, which is now to be applied to London, is full of warning to Catholics as to the danger of any scheme which destroys the protection of the cumulative vote, and it is in the light of that experience I must consider the proposals of this Bill.

What I have always desired to see is a combination of the School Board system—that is, popular control—with the system of rate aid to voluntary schools. We actually have that system in London already in the case of the Jewish community. In the East End there are several Jewish schools, one of which is the largest voluntary school in the world, and there are also Jewish Board schools, the buildings of which have been erected at the cost of the rates, the teachers in which are paid out of the rates, and the teaching in which is thoroughly Jewish and as denominational as the teaching in any Catholic school. The School Board gets over the difficulty of giving rate aid to sectarian schools in this way. The Jewish schools teach only the Old Testament, therefore they do not teach any Christian formula or definite Christian doctrine; and the Jewish teacher is appointed, not because he is a Jew—that would be sectarianism —but because he knows Yiddish, and can teach Yiddish to the children. By this subtlety the School Board, swearing it will never give a penny to denominationalism, grants money for the teaching of the Jewish religion by Jewish teachers to Jewish children. I do not blame them for it, but what I do contend is, that if you endow the maximum of Jewish dogma, you have no right to refuse to endow a minimum of Christian doctrine. If zealots on both sides had kept out of the way that is how the question might have been dealt with. If, on the one hand, Catholics had declared, as they were ready to do, that they invited every form of control and investigation by public authority, and, on the other hand, the public authority had been willing to deal only with the secular education for which they paid, leaving to the schools the question of the particular religious doctrine they should teach, we should not now be face to face with the religious war which I believe is seriously threatening the voluntary school system. What is the position with regard to our schools? We are face to face with the abolition of the School Board and the cumulative vote, and I must say that, seeing we have always had representatives on the School Board, and that at present two excellent Catholic priests are members, I view with some alarm and considerable regret the disappearance of the School Board. I do that the more because of recent proceedings at the School Board.

The hon. Member for North Camberwell moved this Resolution—

> "That, having regard to the large population of London, and to the very great extent of the work which has to be performed in connection with primary education, and, further, to the large amount of work which will be entailed in developing and organising technical and higher education, it is the opinion of the School Board for London that this work cannot be adequately discharged by any body attached to, or subordinate to, any local authority elected for London and charged with other and onerous duties."

That resolution, which I interpret as a strong condemnation of the machinery of this Bill, was seconded by the late leader of the Moderate Party, supported by several Moderates, and carried by thirty-one to seventeen, the two Catholic members of the Board voting in the majority. Therefore, in taking up a position of hesitation—I will not develop it into hostility at present—with regard to the machinery of the Bill, I am acting in accord with the Catholic members, who are most competent to speak on the matter, and who have definitely declared their opinion in the manner I have stated. I must, however, express my thorough approval of the recognition of the principle of co-option. I do not lay down the doctrine that electioneering is one of the highest of political arts, though, certainly, it leads to the highest political positions, nor am I disposed to lay it down as the sole means of proving the qualifications of an education authority. There is something to be said for educationalists who do not care for the tumultuous and tempestuous proceedings of electioneering, having an opportunity of placing their services at the disposal of the public through another channel. With the extinction of the cumulative vote, co-option is the only protection we have for the representation of our religion. The feeling of my friends is that the Borough Councils are not bodies to which our destinies can safely be entrusted. On the question as between a large central body representing the entire community, and a small local body representing often local prejudices and narrowness, I agree with the position of Lord Salisbury in 1885, when he said that if he had to make his choice between County Councils all over Ireland and a Home Rule Parliament in Dublin, he would choose the Home Rule Parliament as being more likely to safeguard the rights of minorities. I should be in favour of the central authority at Spring Gardens as a safer guardian of the rights of minorities than the scattered local bodies throughout the Metropolis. I hope the Government will take up a broad and open attitude on this Bill. Nobody can expect them to abandon the principle of rate aid to voluntary schools, but I hope they will see that the education of this great city is entrusted to a body that is equal to the demands of the work. As far as I am able to form an opinion, I would be inclined to support an *ad hoc* body, or, if that be impossible, to support an increase of the County Council which would make it adequate to the dignity and difficulties of the task imposed upon it.

*SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London City): I have listened with attention to speeches, many of which have been most interesting, and while I can quite understand that there must be divergence of opinion upon a subject presenting so many aspects as does that of the education of London, yet I confess I am surprised at the action taken by some—though I hope but a few—of the hon. Members representing metropolitan constituencies. Only a short time ago the Government were urged to create Borough Councils, to invest them with large powers, and ultimately to enable them to become self-governing entities. This question of education is one of the first important matters, so far as the Metropolis is concerned, which has come before the House since the creation of the Borough Councils, and we find some of their members seizing upon this opportunity to belittle their position or capacity for undertaking their share of the work and responsibility. I should like to know why representatives of the Borough Councils are less able to carry out with ability and integrity the work of education than the members of the London County Council. They are elected by the same body, and they, to a large extent, recruit the London County Council; and I fail to see why, if they are intelligent enough to sit at Spring

Gardens, their ability is questioned, and why they are unable and unfit to represent their borough on the Education Board. I do not wish to minimise the work done by the Technical Education Board, upon which I had the honour of sitting for some years. I know the excellent work it has done, but I attribute the happy results attendant upon that work to obvious reasons. The first is that it is helped and assisted by outside aid, and secondly, that it never permits either party politics or religious controversies to come within the purview of its objects, its ends, or its debates. Let us assume for a moment that the London County Council had a clear majority on this Board—are we sure that this excellent rule of not permitting politics and eschewing religious controversies will be adhered to in the future? The answer is clear from what took place at the meeting of the London County Council yesterday. In presenting the Report of the Parliamentary Committee of the London County Council on the London Education Bill the Committee use these words—

> "The indifference thus shown by the Government to the views of the Council in a matter which vitally affects its interests and position might perhaps have been anticipated."

The want of ordinary courtesy and consideration for this House is almost amusing, but I will leave that matter to the judgment of the House. Our first duty is not to look after the interests of either the London County Council or any other body, but to look after the interests of the children of this country, upon whom the greatness of this Empire depends in the future, and I am sure no question of expediency will allow His Majesty's Government to overlook such an important consideration. But the subsequent action of the London County Council upon the receipt of this Report still more discloses how an assured majority would use its dower. By a large majority the following Resolution was carried by the Council—

> "And this Council earnestly protests against being required by law to make rates to be applied in the maintenance of denominational schools not under public control, and in the payment of salaries to teachers who, while paid wholly out of public money, are subject to religious tests."

Why, Sir, if this means anything it means that those schools which are under denominational influence, and which educate an enormous percentage of our children, would have the greatest difficulty in obtaining the requisite funds to carry on their work. I would be the last to use the slightest influence over the religious opinions of anyone, but to eliminate our voluntary schools would be, to my mind, a national calamity, for I think education based upon religion—not necessarily of a sectarian character—is the bedrock of the greatness and stability of our country. The right hon. and learned Member for Haddington, in his admirable speech yesterday, referred to the necessity for continuity. This would not be attained by the elimination of the Borough Councils and by the sole retention of the London County Council. Both bodies are periodically elected, and as soon as next March the London County Council may have an entirely changed membership.

Before sitting down I cannot refrain from referring to the immense debt the country owes to the voluntary schools, which have really been the pioneers of education in London, and which have been and still are carried on, in many cases without being subsidised by the State. It was stated during the debate yesterday that the initiation of anything like technical education came from the London County Council. That, Sir, is absolutely inaccurate. Technical education had its inception in the City of London, and was doing good and solid work many years before the London County Council, as its understudy, developed it with the rates of London at its back. Among the many imperishable monuments to the honour of London, some of the most lasting and greatest will be such schools as Charterhouse, Christ's Hospital, St. Paul's, the City of London Schools, the Grocers, the Mercers, the Drapers, the Skinners, the Leather Sellers, the Goldsmiths, the Clothworkers, and many more, which in days gone by were, with others, practically the only pivots around which education revolved. Nor is the City of London backward at paying its quota in educating the masses of to-day. It is reasonable, I think, to say that the children educated within the confines of the City do not exceed 1,200, many of whom come from outside the City boundaries, and yet the sums paid by the City for education during the last ten years amounted to the large sum of £2,342,175, or equal to an average rate of 1s. 1d. in the £. I do not say we have done more than we should have done. Now it is proposed to give the City of London a representation of two members, and this certainly does not err upon the side of liberality, and I am bound to say I am disappointed in that particular. Knowing the difficulties of the large question of education, and realising that the Government have done their utmost for the welfare of London as a whole, I cordially support the Second Reading. I hope that when this Bill goes to Committee it will be judiciously dealt with, and I hope we shall come at last to a scheme which will be worthy of this House, and which will do undoubted good to thousands and tens of thousands of children in this vast Metropolis.

*SIR MICHAEL FOSTER (London University): My right hon. and learned friend the Member for Haddington in the speech he delivered yesterday made reference to the University of London, which I have the honour to represent. In view of that, and in view more especially of the intimate relations which must obtain between the University and the new education authority, and of the great importance that both of them should work together for the education of this great city, I crave the indulgence of the House to say a few words on that topic. It was by the House that a few years ago the University of London was entrusted with the higher teaching of this great city. Since that time a number of able and energetic men have been building, and have made progress in building, a University of which I venture to say the like does not exist elsewhere. While not giving up the older functions of a University, it has opened its doors to everyone, irrespective of creed or race, in all parts of the Empire, and it has set itself to be the active working University of this great city. While the old Universities are centripetal in their action, while they draw to themselves students from various parts of the country, this University has set itself the centrifugal task to carry University teaching to the homes of persons in the city, and persons of all classes. The University recognises that the higher and fuller knowledge given by University training is good for all conditions of life, for commerce, for industry, for business, for trade as well as for law, medicine, and the Church. It has done this, and it has also determined that it should not while doing this renounce the higher task of a University, to help and train those who belong to it in furthering, extending the bounds of knowledge, and in the higher interests of science, letters and art. Now I ask myself the question, what should be the connection between this University with these special functions and the new education authority? The right hon. Member for Haddington suggested that the University might be represented by statute upon that educational authority. For myself, I am not quite sure whether it would not be best to leave the two perfectly free to work by mutual consent for that which they think to be for the best good of the city, but if there is to be representation I would venture to suggest that the word "expert" does not exactly state what would be the intervention of the University. A true expert—for there are false experts—is in the nature of leaven. A little goes a long way. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." But it is not that kind of action which the University of London would ask for. It would rather seek to be accepted as a partner working for the common good of the city. That is a matter rather for Committee than for to-day, but I would venture to make one or two further observations, and in doing so I am following no mandate but simply speaking my own views.

I would ask what are the features in the new authority which would render it most effective for working in common with the University of London? What are the features which the University of London, I believe, would desire to see upon this educational authority. I think I may say, in the first place, that it must be one authority for the whole of London To the University of London, London is one and indivisible. It is not a collection of houses or parishes, but a flow of persons to and fro through a large area The authority must also be homogeneous, so that it may make up its mind swiftly and effectively and it must have the power of the purse. Then, in the second place, I venture to say that the authority must deal with all kinds of education, from the beginning to the end. We hear of the division of education into three categories — primary, secondary, and technical—and of each clamouring to have home rule. The University of London does not recognise these distinctions. It welds them all together, and it will look to the new authority to have the same view, recognising that even the higher learning is ineffective unless it is based upon a sound beginning, recognising also that the very beginning is only effective when it sets its face towards the heights to which it may reach. In the third place, this University is very largely composed of women. Women take part in its governing body by right and not by permission. And I take it that, if the new authority is to work hand in hand with the University of London there must be women on that authority—not one or two women picked out by favour, but women sitting there not by permission but by right. Now I ask myself, can I recognise the acceptance of these features in the Bill? I cannot tell, for I must confess that, although I have listened to the debate with care for two days I do not understand the Measure, and my feeble eyes will not permit me to pierce through the fleshy clauses of the Bill and see that intangible soul which was called its principle. I would like specially to know this because the University of London is a real democratic University in the true sense of that much used word. I would like to know whether the soul of the Bill entails, as was stated by the Secretary to the Board of Education, the abolition of the School Board, or whether, as was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge, it simply means its absorption, because these are two very different things. It seems to me that, according to the latter suggestion of the hon. Member for Camberwell, there might be an election of a third real councillor, with all the functions of a councillor, who would by the force of circumstances become in all probability the representative of the old School Board. That enormous break of continuity between the old and the new, which every educationalist must regret, would thus be avoided. I trust that His Majesty's Government will give most serious consideration to that suggestion of the hon. Member for Camberwell. I thought when the Prime Minister rose I should see clearly what the principle of the Bill was. The right hon. Gentleman said there were two principles. One was that the County Councils should be the authority. The other was that there was to be first of all a delegation of powers, and afterwards he said there was to be a decentralisation. Now, a delegation of powers there must be, and it seems to me that the School Board has not used the opportunities which were given it by the Act for the full delegation of its powers, but delegation, large and complete, is one thing, and decentralisation may be one thing and it may be another. It may be a mere delegation. It may spell inco-ordination. If the principle of the Bill is in this decentralisation, what is the principle of that decentralisation which is to be the principle of the Bill? But from all I can hear I am still in the dark as to what will be the effect of this Second Reading, and what will happen if we listen to the voice of the charmer who says "Once in Committee all will be well." As a humble man of science I am enamoured of the unknown, but today I hesitate to plunge into the unknown abyss which is open before me.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I have listened with very great interest indeed to the speech of my hon. friend. I have taken very great interest in education for a long time, having been twenty years connected with the Education Department. The point with which I wish to deal is the authority. It seems to me that the authority is the essential part of the Bill. We are all agreed with the general principles of last year's Act. I must candidly say that I do not approve of the authority proposed to be created by this Bill. I cannot think that it is the wisest, and, as one who has had to do with education, I cannot myself see how the work of education in London can be efficiently done by this scheme. My hon. friend who has just spoken has taken a very high line on University work and how that is to be part and parcel of the scheme. I prefer to go to the other end of the educational ladder. I cannot see how the work of individual schools can be properly superintended by a body with the County Council at one end and the Borough Councils at the other. It seems to me to be an altogether mistaken policy. In my judgment these enormous boroughs are big enough to have bodies of their own. I know that this is not a very popular line, but I do say that a great district like Islington, which is as populous as Birmingham, could bring forward people capable of undertaking the management of education. Those who are Londoners, who know the special character of the work of London, must acknowledge that the attempt to treat London as one whole is practically impossible. I am convinced that the chance of a successful scheme of education, higher and elementary, is exciting local interest in every part of London. That has not been done in the past in regard to the great boroughs like Paddington, Islington, St. Pancras, Westminster and the rest. We endeavoured to develop the local spirit by creating these municipal bodies, and to a certain extent we have been successful. But if we wish to have efficient superintendence of the schools and local interest in education, which would inspire the best results, we are running away from it by not making the municipal authorities the educational authorities. It is unreasonable to suppose that there are not in every one of these boroughs, plenty of men who would come forward and devote themselves to this work; and in ignoring that the Government are making a great mistake. I do not think the system proposed by the Bill is satisfactory. It contemplates a certain number of borough representatives on the Education Committee, but the representation is very indirect, and there would not be that feeling of responsibility in the method of selection proposed which we desire. I would very much prefer that each borough should have some definite education authority of its own, and that there should be a connecting link with University and higher education as distinct from elementary. I am convinced that by the scheme of the Bill proper individual attention would not be given to the schools unless there was further delegation to some body elected in each borough by the people. In some of the boroughs there are thirty or forty schools, and it is simply impossible that they can be looked after efficiently by a central authority.

There is another point; it seems a mistake and a grave danger to place such enormous responsibility and patronage in the hands of the London County Council. That body would soon riva the power of the central Government itself. In my opinion I would rather have an *ad hoc* body, although there are great objections to it, than that proposed to be created by the Bill. We have been told that education is to be carried on as part and parcel of municipal work, but we have departed from the principle, and some boroughs of from 10,000 to 20,000 of population in the provinces are exempted from the control of County Councils. But in London it is not proposed to exempt these enormous boroughs recently formed, and all are to be merged educationally into a body of such gigantic proportions as to make it impossible for it to look after education efficiently. I protest against the idea that the Borough Councils could not do the work; and I am sure that more interest would be roused in regard to education if the prestige and power of the local authorities were increased, and that it would be better for the children if they were looked after by those in the district. I cannot be accused of being a reactionary in educational matters. I had something to do with the Education Act of 1870, and I am not opposed in any way to School Boards; but I say that it is a mistake to treat London as one whole educationally. I want to see the system of last year's Act carried out in connection with the London boroughs and that these great boroughs should be given not indirect representation but a real substantial part in the management of their schools. If that were done it would be a benefit to the people and to education.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I will occupy the time of the House for only a short time, but I want to state my opinion of this Bill, not from the point of view of machinery, but rather from the Nonconformist position. The hon. Member who has just sat down said that in his judgment the essential part of the Bill was the authority, and that it provided an authority which he did not approve of. Is it a fair question to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will vote for the Second Reading of the Bill ?

*Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I did not vote for the First Reading.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: He cannot vote for the Second Reading of a Bill the essential part of which he disapproves. I do not think I have heard more than two or three speeches from the other side of the House, or even from the hon. Gentleman who represents the Irish party, which approved of the authority set up by the Bill; and even these hon. Gentlemen have made suggestions for the improvement of the Bill. There has, in fact, not been a frank approval of the Board. I make an exception in favour of the hon, Member for Westminster, but his position is peculiar. I point out that although hon. Members criticise the machinery which is professedly regarded as the crux of the Bill, they are going to vote for the Second Reading. The machinery is simply subsidiary to another object, and that is the object of the Bill of last year, viz., the subsidising of a sectarian system of education in this country. That is regarded as the essence of the Bill. Personally, I have not been a great supporter of the *ad hoc* system. I think our system in Wales of the County Councils managing higher education has worked well. But when the hon. Member for Scotland Division puts the case on the ground of subsidising Jewish schools, I would point out that there are essential differences between subsidising the Jewish schools in the East End of London, and subsidising sectarianism. In the first place, the Jews have set up schools for their own children; but take the Anglican schools throughout the country: one-third of the children attending them belong to other religious persuasions. Another difference is that the Jews never claim that the fact that they have got a school in the district is a reason for preventing the education authority from setting up a free school in the same district. There was the London case in which the responsible School Board, representing the ratepayers, proposed to set up a school which, in their judgment, was necessary; but it was objected to by the representatives of the sectarian school because there was an Anglican school close by. That is being constantly done by the Anglicans, but it is never done by the Jews. The Anglicans' claim is that they must have a monopoly of education in particular districts for all classes of children. There is a third distinction of very great importance. If the Jews were split up into a number of sects, and asked us to set up a school for each sect, I think the London School Board would decline to recognise that. My hon. friend says that you set up schools for Christians; but that is not the Anglican position. They say, "set up a school for the Anglicans, for the Wesleyans, for the Catholics, or for any other sect." But we say that that cannot possibly be done on account of the number of sects, and that the the education would become inefficient. That, however, is the contention of the Bill of last year, and that is why I object to this London Bill.

Supposing it was possible to meet the views of every hon. Member who has criticised the machinery of this Bill, still the Bill would be as bad as the Bill of last year. The objection that was entertained to the Bill of last year was not an objection to its machinery, but an objection to its principle. What is the Government doing at the present moment ? Last year's Bill has been practically repudiated, or, at any rate, has not been accepted by the bulk of the nation. Every test to which the nation has been put shows that in the most overwhelming manner. Why, even the friends of the Government disapprove of it. High Churchmen criticise it, and several of them condemn it. They say they regard the Government as having betrayed them, and that they regard the Kenyon-Slaney Amendment as treachery. The Nonconformists protest against it; and it is perfectly well known that it is influencing the judgment of the country. Here is a Bill to which the country has given every possible expression of disapproval, but which the Prime Minister now ventures to extend to London. That is a very serious state of things. The Prime

Minister is practically provoking religious civil war in this country. It is a much more serious matter than hon. Gentlemen seem to imagine. Things are going on in this country—I express no judgment upon them, though I have my own opinion—which I venture to say would not be tolerated in Ireland. Why? Because the Prime Minister knows perfectly well he has not the sanction of public opinion in carrying out the law. Here are organisations openly organised for the purpose of declining to carry out an Act of Parliament. If there were such organisations in Ireland for the purpose of refusing to pay rent, they would have been suppressed long ago. Why this distinction? There is only one reason, and that is because it is a law which is not based on popular judgment, which the Government had no mandate to pass, and, therefore, no mandate to carry out. Why does the Prime Minister proceed, after the expressions of opinion to which I have referred, to extend it to London? If there were any great principle involved I could understand it. But what is the principle? Is it for the sake of religious instruction, is it because he believes in giving the children a thoroughly religious and moral training? The right hon. Baronet who represents the City of London says that is the reason; but that, as far as he is concerned, he does not mean by religious instruction, sectarian instruction. I should like to ask whether hon. Members are watching what is going on in Wales. It is really a very good test of the whole object and principle of this Bill. We were told that the object of the Bill of last year was to subsidise religious instruction and definite Christian teaching. What happened in Wales? The County Councils approached the Diocesan Associations and said, "If it is religious instruction you want, we are prepared to meet you." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University smiles, but I would rather have the interpretation of Churchmen in Wales as to the best way of instructing their children, than that of the right hon. Gentleman. The County Council said, "If you want to protect your own property in the schools we are prepared to do that." The Diocesan Associations made two or three specific demands with regard to religious instruction. The County Councils in their reply said that they advocated the complete and unqualified acceptance of the proposals in the St. Asaph memorandum as to the provision to be made for religious instruction in all schools, for securing that such religious instruction should be regular and effective, and for special facilities for Church children. Let the House realise that. All the conditions laid down by the Church representatives in the Diocese of St. Asaph for religious instruction, not merely in their own schools but in Board schools, were accepted in the most unqualified manner by the County Councils; and yet the Church representatives refused to proceed. How, after that, can hon. Gentlemen say that it is for religious instruction they are fighting?

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): I think I am correct in saying that the religious instruction referred to was religious instruction out of school hours, and was in no way a part of the school curriculum.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman's smile was premature; he has not mastered the circumstances. Whatever the conditions were, the County Councils gave a most complete and unqualified acceptance to them. They did not alter a comma in the demands made in regard to religious instruction. They said that they would accept them in their entirety, if it was religious instruction that was wanted. After that how can you say you are fighting for the great principle of teaching religion and morality to the children of the land, when we are prepared to accept your own terms? More than that, the Church representatives in Wales would have the additional advantage of not only getting religious instruction in their own schools, which are attended by only one-third of the children, but it would be extended, for the first time, to the Board schools also, which are attended by two-thirds of the children. Yet they refused the whole of the terms. Why? Purely on the ground of patronage. That is what they were fighting for. I am glad that these negotiations have proceeded. I had hoped that something would come of them, because I candidly confess I would rather not fight the Church in Wales over the question of instruction in the elementary schools. In higher education and secondary education we proceeded without any sectarian wrangles, and we succeeded because we kept out sectarianism. I hoped that we might have come to an arrangement with the Church, and have kept sectarianism out of the primary schools also, and that we should work hand in hand for the instruction of the youth of Wales. The best men of the Church were willing to meet us. Some of the most distinguished laymen, and some of the most distinguished of the clergy were prepared to meet us; but the majority of the clergy would not surrender patronage; and they were willing to perpetuate all this anger and agitation over the religion of peace and concord, in Wales as elsewhere. This is an exposure of what this Bill means. It is not a fight about authority, or about religious instruction; it is simply a fight to get additional funds in order to enable the Church to obtain more patronage in London. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would have accepted the terms we offered; but they allowed their judgment to be overridden by the clergy, but not by the best of the clergy. What was the condition asked for by the clergy themselves? It was religious instruction on the basis of the syllabus of the London School Board. The clergy in the diocese of St. Asaph selected the syllabus of the London School Board as their model. We offered them no end of syllabi, but they said they would accept nothing but the syllabus of the London School Board. Yet here you are proposing to destroy the School Board which formulated that magnificent syllabus. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London said that our first business was to look after the interests of the children, and not the interests of the County Council or the Borough Councils. He forgot Diocesan Associations. Our interests also are to the children first; but are the interests of the children involved in perpetuating these sectarian wrangles? Are you proposing a system that will enable us to work together for the purpose of putting instruction in this country on the footing which obtains in America, Germany, and other countries, which is our only aim and object?

*Sir W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I claim the indulgence of the House for a few minutes only, as I know many of my hon. friends wish to speak on this subject. A very difficult task lies before us, and we wish to approach the scheme of the Government with all fairness. But if we wish to suggest Amendments later, now is the time to speak, because it is most valuable to those in charge of the Bill to know the opinion of their supporters in regard to it. I am not going to follow the hon. Gentleman into the religious wrangle which we have just heard. The matter before us is too important; and I regret that this bone of discord should have been thrown into the debate. So far as the broad allegation of the hon. Member with regard to the general working of the Act of last year is concerned, I can assure him, with a political experience nearly double his own, and with some knowledge of this question, that whatever unfortunate differences may have been stirred up in the Principality, in my own county and many other counties, before the Act has been three years in operation, it will have proved false all the calumnies uttered in regard to it. As to the main allegation of the hon. Gentleman, we had a conspicuous instance this afternoon which I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without mentioning. During the last two days I have been inundated with letters and postcards from Nonconformist friends in my constituency, asking me to vote against this Bill on the ground that last year's Bill was a measure to Romanise education in this country. I have stated over and over again that last year's Act was a measure which would rather have the contrary effect than otherwise. This very afternoon, last year's Act was denounced, hip and thigh, by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, because, as he said, its primary effect was to very seriously injure his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen in Lancashire and other parts of the country. So much for the contention of the hon. Member. I follow it no further. Of course the Government have had huge difficulty in approaching this vexed problem, and whatever Measure they might have produced must naturally have met with the strongest opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite. For that we were prepared. I have before now sympathised with those who object to the destruction of the London School Board, and I have had sympathy with their labours, and appreciated the work they have done, but I feel that the School Board must be sacrificed *ab initio* on the altar of consistency as regards this Bill.

We are told that the principle of the Bill is the establishment of one authority plus delegation to deal with education in London. Much has been said with regard to the proposed authority, and before I deal with what I think are the scarcely direct powers vested in that authority, I must thank the Government for having fixed on the London County Council as the main authority for the guidance of education in the Metropolis. It is obvious that the hon. Member for Camberwell must have had the strongest reason for opposing that authority, but any argument that he has urged against this Bill with regard to the difficulties from which this authority will suffer, and their inability to undertake the education of the great Metropolis, are, I think, fallacious, in the face of the immense energy they have shown in every direction, and in the face of the splendid work they have done for technical and secondary education. There is no other municipal authority which can show so splendid a record as the London County Council, which is, we are told, unable to add to their work the labour by delegation, of the education of the Metropolis. Why should we ignore a body like this which holds the strings in its hands, which is even now in telephonic communication probably with some of the greatest technical and scientific institutions throughout their district. I think it is not only able but competent to deal with this great problem, and that is shown by its past educational zeal and success. I think this scheme of delegation the best that could be devised under the circumstances. I must say I was rather terrified when I first heard the scheme, as introduced by my hon. friend, but I now find that I was mistaken. From my hon. friend's speech the other night I feared that not only were the Borough Councils to be managers of private elementary schools, but I understood that they were to have the exclusive right of management as against the central authority, because I understood they were to have the power of choosing sites for schools, which would have given them a very strong lien on the finances of the central authority. But my hon. friend has got rid of this objection, so far as I am concerned, because he said most definitely last night that this choice of sites was subject ultimately to the local authority. I understand that to mean that representations would only be made to the authority for information as to which they considered the best site for the school. My hon. friend said also that the power of the central authority through its Committee was to be absolute, not only with regard to the salaries of teachers, but also as to accommodation, and they would also be the attendance authority, and would regulate the staff of teachers, so that, so far as the proposed work of these authorities goes, it seems to be more satisfactory than I at first imagined.

The chief objection I have to the Bill as it stands is the formation of this Committee. Those who look at the enormous problem with which we have to deal, and the peculiar circumstances of the Metropolis, will see that it is all-important that if this scheme is to be a success, the powers of the central authority must be absolute and supreme. As the Bill stands it is neither one nor the other, and if the Bill is to emerge from the Committee a satisfactory measure, the power of the central authority must be once and for all absolute and supreme, and must be secured by an adequate majority. If there is any danger of interference with it, the result will be that in framing its Committee the central authority will be tempted to secure that the co-opted members shall be supporters of their own policy in order to secure a majority. Nothing would be more lamentable than to put such a temptation in their way. I believe, after the speech of the Prime Minister, that the Government will be reasonable with regard to Amendments. I supported the Bill of last year because it took the only sensible step with regard to the education of the children of this country—namely, that of placing it under one authority—and because I believe that this Bill must come out of Committee with the London County Council as the real education authority I shall support the Second Reading.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): My right hon. friend has made a very frank confession. He said he was going to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill because he believed it would come out of Committee a totally different Measure. The right hon. Gentleman's Parliamentary experience is long enough to remember another Bill introduced by a Government of which he was a supporter, in 1867, of which Lord Salisbury said that when it finally emerged from the legislative ordeal and was presented for the Royal Assent, only one word of the original Bill remained, and that was the word "whereas." I do not know whether my right hon. friend anticipates such a transformation as that in the case of the present Bill. Before I deal with the points upon which I object to the Bill, and on which I believe nine-tenths of the Members of this House object to it, I should like to point out one or two things on which I believe there is a general consensus of opinion. But there is one thing on which we differ, which is worth noting as a side point on this question. After the speech of the Prime Minister, no one would contradict his declaration that special treatment must be given to London. There is no parallel or analogy to London to be found anywhere. The hon. Member for the University of London, in eloquent language, has pointed that out to the House. He took the higher ground; we may take the lower ground of the real magnitude of London. The wide area, the enormous population, and the necessity of all being combined in something like one municipal corporation—using the word corporation not technically, but as representing an aggregation of authorities—puts London on a totally different footing from any other district. Just remember that if we unite the two great counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire we then get something only approaching two-thirds of the populaiton and educational necessities of London! The Member for Islington said it was a mistake to treat London as a great whole. I say it would be a great mistake to treat London on any other footing, and for the reason given by the Prime Minister himself—that you must have but one rating authority in London on this question. The idea of twenty-nine or thirty London School Boards, each providing the education and raising the rate for its own borough and affording the contrast of the wealthiest borough in London with a local rate little more than half that in the poorest borough, may, I think, be dismissed at once. The education taxation of the whole of London must go to the education of the whole of London, and that can be done only by the control of one authority which governs and rates. Applying that principle, I must enter my individual dissent from the view that it is absolutely essential that the one authority—the one controlling and rating authority—should be the County Council. Not that I have any distrust of the competency of the London County Council, or that I wish in any way to disparage the enormous educational work they have done, but I entertain very grave doubts as to whether a body of 137 members, already charged with the municipal government of this wide area, with an enormous amount of administrative work which has increased, is increasing, and must increase, has either the physical or mental power to discharge, in addition to its present duties, the duty of controlling the education of London. But as the opinion of the House seems to be that this power should be given to the County Council, and, having expressed my dissent, I will not press the matter further.

If it is admitted that the authority should be given to the County Council, we have then two questions to settle: first, the extent of the jurisdiction and power given to the County Council, and secondly, the constitution of the educational Committee through which the Council must act. What is the principle of the measure of last year? We are to carry this Bill in order to adhere to the principle of the Act of 1902. From the first day the question was raised until the last occasion on which it was discussed, the Prime Minister never shrank from maintaining to the utmost extent that the local education authority was to be supreme in finance—that whatever Committees were appointed, whatever delegation was made, whatever administrative powers were vested in other hands, the power of the purse must rest in the County Council or the Borough Council as the case might be. What are the authorities with which the House dealt last year? Before the Government consider whether they will curtail or weaken the authority of the great municipality of the City of London, let me ask what did they give, not only to County Councils and County Borough Councils, but also to small municipal boroughs of 10,000 inhabitants, and urban districts with 20,000 inhabitants? They gave absolute control over every educational function in their respective districts—except in the one point of religious teaching in voluntary schools, which does not arise in connection with my present argument. They gave all these authorities the absolute power of the purse. What else did they do? After providing that the Councils should work through an education authority, they proceeded to prescribe how that authority should be formed, and the first provision was—

> "Every such scheme—

—this is a matter in which neither the local authority nor the Board of Education was to have any choice—

> "Every such scheme shall provide for the appointment by the Council of at least a majority of the Committee, and the persons so appointed shall be persons who are members of the Council, unless, in the case of a county, the Council should otherwise determine."

The cardinal principle which the House accepted, and which is now being put into force, is in entire accord with the general sentiment of the country. County Councils and County Boroughs are not adhering to a bare majority, but are appointing large and effective majorities for the purposes of the Act. But in the case of London, the Council is not to have a majority in the constitution of the Committee. Out of ninety-two members, only thirty-six are members of the County Council. If you are to have continuity in the carrying out of your system, what powers you gave last year you are bound to give this year to the chief municipality in the kingdom—an authority which has already proved itself capable of educational work to a greater extent than any other, and which has discharged this duty to the uniform satisfaction, not only of the public which it represents, but of the educational authorities and experts who are most competent to form a judgment on the matter.

I now come to the proposal to introduce into the Education Committee a body of representatives of the Borough Councils. What are they to be there for? It cannot be to strengthen the authority of the County Council. Is it to complete the representation of the County Council? The representative character of the County Council is complete at present: it represents London. I am sorry not to see in his place the hon. and learned Member for the Stretford Division, who is a great authority on rating, and who also is by no means indisposed to make every allowance for the peculiar views of the Government which he so steadily supports. What did the hon. and learned Member, speaking at Manchester a few days ago, say?

> "It was of the essence of the Education Bill of last session that effective control should be exercised by the county authority, who were responsible to the county ratepayers for the expenditure of the county rate for the purposes of education. This control was assured not only by making the County Council the education authority, but by giving them power to constitute an Education Committee of which a majority should be county councillors. This was an adequate guarantee that taxation should go with representation—a constitutional principle not to be tampered with. In the London Education Bill the Education Committee was to be representative in the various Borough Councils, although the education rate was a county rate and not a borough rate. The result was to place the County Council in a minority on the Education Committee, and to introduce the borough councillors who, so far as the county rate was concerned, had no representative capacity."

These are the words of one of the greatest authorities on rating in this country, and he confessed that—

> "He had not yet heard any adequate explanation of this anomalous and unsound principle."

If I were to talk for half an hour I could not put the case more powerfully than the hon. and learned Member for Stretford did in the words I have quoted.

Another point to which I wish to call the attention of the House is the position of the Borough Councils with reference to administration. In the Act of last year the managers, upon whom, of course, will devolve the real work of Education in London, were to be six in number, and to be appointed, as to four of them, by the central authority, and as to the remaining two, by the minor local authority. This Bill defines the Borough Councils as the minor local authorities. I am strongly in favour of enlisting the sympathy and work of permanent bodies in the different districts of London similar to the present local managers, always subject to the qualification which has been made by several members, and particularly by the hon. Member for the University of London, that the School Board have not carried out as fully as they might have done the principle of devolution, and I think that is a reform which might have followed the passing of this Bill. Why should you not increase the number of local managers to be appointed by the central authority so as to maintain the controlling power, at the same time leaving a smaller number to be appointed by the Borough Councils to secure the local representation which you are anxious to have? We are all agreed that there must be a large measure of decentralisation, and this can only be obtained by getting in each district competent representatives for the central authority. I am sure it would be worthy of the consideration of the Government whether it would not be desirable to have some transitory position which would perpetuate and continue in office the present managers of the schools in various parts of London. You must also have some mode of dealing with women representatives on the Board. The first lesson I learned as Chairman of a School Board was, that our duties were absolutely futile and fruitless unless we had women representatives on the Board. This question of women representatives should not be left to any option, or any choice or prejudice; it should not be left, as the Member for the London University said, to private patronage under which women would be permitted to be present, instead of being authorised by Act of Parliament. I promised to speak very briefly upon this question. I understand that the great bulk of the party opposite support the Second Reading of this Bill upon the understanding that it is the intention of the Government to materially alter this measure in Committee. I understood from the speech of the Prime Minister and from the speech of the Secretary to the Board of Education that it was the intention of the Government not only to make Amendments in the Bill of their own motion, but also to listen to the representations made to them by hon. Members on both sides of the House. With such a statement before us, until we know exactly what the Government intend to do, and how far they will go, until we know whether they are going to accept the principle put forward by the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House, "that the power of the central authority should be absolute and supreme and secured by an absolute majority"—for when that is done the Bill will be a very different measure from what it is now—it is the duty of the Opposition to oppose this Bill.

MR. WALTER LONG: In the speeches we have listened to from hon. Gentlemen opposite there has frequently occurred the opinion that upon this side of the House this Bill is supported in so half-hearted a manner that hon. Gentlemen opposite profess to be astonished that those who have criticised us would be ready to vote for the Second Reading. I have had very considerable experience of Second Reading debates, and until to-day I thought it was usual in discussing the Second Reading to acccept general principles, and I have very seldom listened to the consideration of an important question on the Second Reading when from all quarters there have not come numerous suggestions and reservations as to what the action of the Committee ought to be. If the Second Reading is not for the object of obtaining suggestions for amendment I fail to see what use the stage is. Some hon. Members opposite have said that the policy of the Liberal Party has always been to support an *ad hoc* authority, but I venture to say that the great majority of the speeches made upon the opposite side of the House would have been as suitable to the Second Reading of a Bill which they proposed to amend in Committee, as they are to the position they had laid down of deliberate hostility to this measure. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has immediately preceded me is one in which almost every sentence indicates Amendments, which, without committing the Government at this moment, I have no hesitation in saying could be adopted without materially altering the principle of this Measure; and when hon Gentlemen opposite say that the attitude of my hon. friends on this side of the House is an inconsistent one, and that they are going to vote for a Bill in which they do not believe, I must say they are straining the position almost as much as it was strained by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Aberdeen. I was astounded to hear the right hon. Gentleman declare that without exception the speakers from the Ministerial side of the House had condemned the proposal of the Bill in regard to the Borough Councils. My hon. friend beside me endeavoured to convince the right hon. Gentleman that he had misunderstood him, but without effect. My hon. friend the Member for Westminster made a strong speech in favour of the Bill, but apparently his remarks had been ignored by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. BRYCE: I especially excepted him.

Mr. WALTER LONG: If the hon. Member for Limehouse criticised this proposal I am sure his criticisms were in a totally contrary direction to that in which the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to suggest. His criticism was that the representation given to the Borough Councils was not sufficient. What is the inevitable conclusion to be drawn from the debate of yesterday and to-day? It is, in the first place, that the difficulties surrounding the settlement of the education problem in London are greater, and of a more complicated character, than those which surround the settlement of this problem in the provinces. The second conclusion is that in almost every quarter of the House, if you will put aside the *ad hoc* proposal, you will find that each speaker has had a view, or plan, or suggestion of his own, which does not accord, either in principle or in detail, with the views and suggestions of his own friends. Surely we need not be astonished at this, because there is no doubt that this question is as difficult as it is important, and as hon. Gentlemen know who have had to study it, it has been found almost impossible to secure unanimity of opinion upon it even amongst men who generally act together and hold the same views. I think, therefore, it is a little bit hard to attack the Government because they have made a proposal which is criticised on their own side, as well as on the Benches opposite. I venture to say that my hon. friends behind me who are going to vote for the Second Reading are following a course which has on numerous occasions been adopted in this House, and on both sides of the House, in fact it is the general and common course in regard to a Bill dealing with a complicated question like this. By taking this course hon. Members are supporting the principles of the Measure on the Second Reading, and reserving to themselves the right to make such Amendment as may seem desirable in Committee. I confess that I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen make his sweeping assertion as to the position of the Radical Party with regard to education, with some astonishment. The right hon. Gentleman himself was a party to the recommendations of a Royal Commission which suggested a governing body for education for the Metropolis consisting of eighteen County Council members, seven from the School Board, eight appointed by the Universities and City Guilds, and nine to be co-opted.

Mr. BRYCE: The Report of the Royal Commission dealt with secondary education, and that was an entirely different matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the proposal before the House is a Bill dealing with elementary, secondary, and technical education. The right hon. Gentleman did not confine himself in his criticisms of the new authority to its dealings with elementary education. The recommendation made by the

Royal Commission was in regard to secondary and technical education. I am glad the debate has been conducted in a calmer spirit than marked the consideration of the Bill of last year. I earnestly hope that the controversies of last year will not be revived, and that the House will continue to deal with the Bill from a business-like and educational point of view. Whether for good or for evil, the Government has decided that they can no longer support the *ad hoc* principle. Arguments of the most eloquent kind are to be found in the Report to which the right hon. Gentleman is a consenting party, in favour of our policy, and the grounds which are given must commend themselves to anybody who is anxious to see good local government, whether educational or of any other character. They do not rest only upon the view that it is undesirable to add to your number of elections, and add to the obligations of those who have to elect, but they rest upon the more solid grounds that education is, and ought to form, one of the most important features of local government, and ought to form a part of the duty of those who are entrusted with the general administration of the local affairs of their own area. I venture to say that if you deprive the localities of this duty, and have *ad hoc* bodies elected, you will fail to attain that particular object to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen referred, when he said, that he wanted to secure the interest of the people in this work, to arouse their best energies and command their best efforts in this direction. If you are going to deprive the municipal authorities of this work and this particular form of local government which is so attractive, you will make public men unwilling to become members of your local body, because they will feel that you do not trust them with any work which is really important. So much for the *ad hoc* principle which, as I have already said, is not one to which we are prepared to give our assent. We believe that the lessons of experience are against that principle, and in the best interests of local government, it would be unwise to adopt it. Last year we committed ourselves to the municipal principle in education, and that is the principle which is embodied in this Bill.

Passing from the *ad hoc* argument, I think all the rest of the criticisms we have heard have been criticisms of detail and not of principle. The two most important of these criticisms have been in regard to the inclusion of representatives of the Metropolitan Boroughs on the Education Committee and the absence of women from the governing body. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last called attention to what he called a discrepancy between the proposals of this Bill and the proposals of last year in reference to the first of these two points. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman in the first place that there is this essential difference, as I think he will admit it to be. In last year's Act the majority to be appointed on the Education Committee is a majority of popularly elected members, as compared with the co-opted members, but in the Committee set up by this Bill there are two sets of popularly elected members, the County Council and the Borough Council members. They are elected by the same franchise, and therefore in this respect the Committee proposed by this Bill differs from the Committee of last year, because, taking the representatives of the County Councils and the Borough Councils, you have a clear majority of popularly elected members over the co-opted members. I only say that in explanation of what I think otherwise might be misunderstood. We have admitted from the beginning, and have intended, that the supreme power should be in the hands of the central authority, which is the County Council. We have been blamed for associating the representatives of the Borough Councils with those of the County Council on this Committee, and some hon. Gentlemen opposite have done me too much honour in crediting me not only with the authorship of the proposal, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Haddington and others have stated that I was prepared to die on the floor of the House before I would surrender the position of the boroughs I do not deserve the honour of being the author of the proposal, nor am I so bloodthirsty in its defence as to be ready to take the course which has been suggested, but so long as I am connected with the Local Government Board I shall do my best to discharge my duty. I am responsible that everything that can properly be done, will be done to give powers whereby the usefulness of our various municipal institutions may be improved, and I venture to say that it was not only unjust, but in the highest sense unwise, to lay down in this House, when we are dealing with municipal development, that these Borough Councils in London are not fit to be entrusted with work which I am sure they will do admirably. I am perfectly willing to admit that there is great force in the argument of the right hon. Member for Haddington, that the supremacy of the central authority must not be imperilled by placing in the way of the Borough Councils temptations, which they might find irresistible, of using the power of co-optation for the purpose of obtaining a majority which they would not otherwise have. It is clear that the power of the central authority must be made supreme and unquestionable, but I submit that can be done perfectly well without refusing to recognise the position of the metropolitan boroughs. There have been various proposals made, such as that of increasing the numbers of the County Council, and each one of which is well worthy of consideration, and the best of them can be engrafted on to the Bill without abandonment of the main principle of the Measure. The Prime Minister has made it perfectly clear that the underlying principle of the Bill is the supremacy of the central authority, the London County Council, accompanied by the delegation of such educational work as can be properly delegated to them, to the borough authorities, so that there shall no longer be that extreme centralisation which, we believe, has caused a great deal of the mischief which has undoubtedly occurred in the Metropolis. My hon. friend the Member for Islington has argued that the metropolitan boroughs should be given more control than the Bill gives to them and should be set up as central authorities. That proposal is not one which can be seriously entertained. I think the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me made it perfectly clear that to allow a small borough to spend what it liked without any outside control would be an impossible and untenable proposition.

There is one other objection to which repeated references have been made, and that is the way in which the change proposed by the Bill would affect the position of women. To say, as has been said, that if the Bill passes the advantage now enjoyed on the School Board of the services of women will be lost, is not quite a fair presentment of the case. In the first place, we thought that opportunity would be afforded under the Bill as it stands for at least five of the co-opted members to be women, and further, that by delegating large powers as to the management of the local schools to the Borough Councils, and giving them power to act through committees on which women can sit, we were securing that an even larger number of women should take part in the administration of education than has been the case under the existing law. It is argued, however, that the power to co-opt women being optional, is one which might be disregarded; and if the Government thought there was any ground for criticism of that kind they would be quite willing to make it obligatory on the Councils to co-opt women for these purposes, so that that is an objection to which there is really not much foundation. I believe that every criticism that has been advanced, except that which has been directed in favour of the creation or the retention of an *ad hoc* authority, can be dealt with in Committee, and cannot be regarded as vital to the Bill on the Second Reading. I should think myself false to my trust as the Minister responsible for Local Government if I did not do my best to secure the development of the powers of all our municipal authorities, but I am not guilty of the hostility to the London County Council of which hon. Gentlemen opposite have so often accused me. On the other hand, I am quite willing to absolve them of the hostility to the Borough Councils of which they have sometimes been accused; and I think we might cry "quits" on these matters, and each and all of us do our best to secure that both the County Council and the Borough Councils shall be given a fair and prudent share of the administration of London affairs. We regard the Bill as a genuine and prudent development of local government, and we believe that when amended it will do the work which we have in view. On these grounds we commend it, and ask the House to give it a Second Reading.

*Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): I shall not detain the House more than a moment or two, but I want to clear away a misapprehension which might arise from the speech of the hon. Member for Westminster. The right hon. Gentleman has said that it was a very strong speech in support of the Bill. I am not going to deal with a Bill which is not before the House, but I will deal with the facts by which the hon. Gentleman supported this Bill. He complained of the influence of the teachers in London elections, and he gave as an illustration the case of a teacher who, he said, came to London from the country and was elected President of the National Union of Teachers, was put up by the teachers as a candidate for the School Board, and was elected by 18,000. The hon. Member stated that he quarrelled with the teachers afterwards, and that at the next election he only secured 400 votes. The hon. Member did not give the name of the candidate nor the constituency for which he stood. I happen to know all the facts of the case, because I was Chairman of the Committee which made the arrangements for those elections, and I think when I tell the House what the actual facts were, it will be seen that the hon. Member has not put before the House the actual facts. It was the election in the Finsbury Division in 1897. The candidates were chosen by the Council of Progressive Representatives. A number of names of candidates was put before that Council. The three candidates chosen to contest the Division by the Progressives were Miss Eve, Mr. Bowden, and Lord Beauchamp. These three were elected. Mr. Bowden was second on the poll. The hon. Member stated that during the next three years he quarrelled with the National Union of Teachers. He did nothing of the kind. He was expelled from that Union for a breach of confidence. He sued the National Union of Teachers for libel, and judgment was given in favour of the defendants. Mr. Bowden, in consequence of this, was not recommended to the Progressive Council by the Committee; three other persons were chosen to stand for the constituency and they were all elected. Mr. Bowden, notwithstanding his record in that libel action, also stood but he only received 405 votes. I venture to submit to the House that that is not a case which supports the hon. Member for Westminster's statement that the National Union of Teachers ruled the School Board of London with a grip of iron.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: The hon. Member has not justified his assertion that I stated the facts inaccurately. All I said was that this gentleman, when he received the full support of the National Union of Teachers, obtained 18,000 votes, but when he lost that support he only received 400 votes. The hon. Member's statement amounted to the same thing.

*Mr. CORRIE GRANT: I have recited accurately what the hon. Member said when he was addressing the House, but if he thinks that I have misrepresented him, I am glad to be corrected. I have put the facts before the House, and am content to leave the matter to the judgment of the House. Let me come to the next case which the hon. Member put before the House. He asserted that the School Board had been in favour of the London County Council being the authority for controlling elementary education, until the teachers at a meeting at Queen's Hall dictated to the Progressive Party on the London School Board, that they should insist on an *ad hoc* body.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: I never said anything about dictating.

*Mr. CORRIE GRANT: I may have been wrong in using the word "dictated"; what the hon. Gentleman said was that it was in obedience to a resolution of the National Union of Teachers in Queen's Hall.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: I said nothing about obedience.

Mr. CORRIE GRANT: The hon. Gentleman then went on to quote, as he said, a resolution of the London School Board passed last year which stated that the London County Council should be the authority for elementary education. Now here is the resolution, which my hon. friend the Member for Camberwell has copied for me out of *The Times.* Mr. Bridgeman, a Moderate member of the London School Board, introduced the resolution in April, and it was carried in June.

> "That the London School Board approve of the policy of the Education Bill recently introduced by the Government whereby, while preserving the present rights of voluntary schools to give denominational religious instruction, such schools are in other respects brought under the same authority as the other elementary schools. [Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: Hear, hear: That is the County Council.] And that they participate in a school rate in the same way as other schools."

That was only asking that the same rate aid should be extended to the denominational schools in London as had been given in the country. Moreover, the hon. Gentleman who moved the resolution said he put his case only on rate aid, that he did not commit himself to any authority, and that he himself was in favour of more popular control than the Act of 1902 gave. These are the facts of the case, and I doubt myself whether they support what the hon. Gentleman opposite called the strong speech which Mr. Bridgeman made in support of the measure. I should like to have had time to say several things about this Bill, but I will sum them up. In the first place I decline altogether to discuss a Bill which is not before the House. We are promised Amendments which are to be made in Committee in the future. Well, I have been in Committee with the Government once on an Education Bill, and I have no desire to go there again to be closured, to be guillotined, and then to have important Amendments introduced into the measure which were never heard of at the Second Reading, and not put on the paper until after the closure and guillotine had been applied. If such a suggestion as has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite had been made in the old days, a Motion for the adjournment of the House would at once have been moved, in order that the Government should put their Amendments on the Paper. To-day we are invited to pass the Second Reading of the Bill with a vague promise of Amendment. That may satisfy the right hon. Member for Kent, but after one experience of the Government it does not satisfy me. We are told by the right hon. Gentleman that he heard with astonishment that hon. Members on this side of the House supported the *ad hoc* principle. Does the right hon. Gentleman remember that he himself was one of the tellers for a motion for an *ad hoc* authority in 1870, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University, and the hon. Member for Honiton both voted with him for an *ad hoc* authority in 1870, while to-day they are supporting the municipalisation of education? There is no disputing that a good deal can be said for an *ad hoc* authority. You may get better administration when you elect men for one purpose than for a number of purposes, and you may get better work out of the men elected for one purpose than for various purposes. That has to be tested by experience, and not by prophecy. As the Bill stands, it proposes an Education Committee on which the London County Council shall be in a minority. Now, in the Act of 1902, it was laid down that the County Councils and the Borough Councils should have a majority on the Education Committee. Again, the Act of 1902 gives the control of both provided and non-provided schools to the local education authority. In this Bill the control of the provided schools is not given to the education authority but taken from them. This Bill is a sinister attempt to take from London what has been given to the country. It kills the School Board, it shuts out women from doing the work which they have so well done in the past, and it creates a system of management which is bound to break down. For these reasons I shall oppose the proposal that the Bill be read a second time.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I only desire to say one or two words as a London Member. Two speeches have been delivered which have very materially contributed to the value of the debate and the solution of the question at issue. The last was by the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton, with whose criticisms, especially as to the constitution of the education authority and of the Education Committee, I express my hearty concurrence. What we did in the Act of 1902 we cannot depart from now in dealing with the case of

London; and I cannot forget the closing words of the right hon. Gentleman when he said that if that were done the Bill would become a very good Bill. That is what some of us on this side of the House have been determined to demand. The other speech which must have given satisfaction to these Benches was the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, that the municipal principle of the Act of 1902 will be adhered to in relation to this measure. Well, whether we approve of the School Board or not, I am bound to say that I ask myself the question—"What would our education have been without the action of the London School Board?" I maintain that we owe to the London School Board the greatest obligation. For all practical purposes this House will have to accept the municipal principle as the basis of education in London and the provinces alike. It is perfectly true, as the right hon. Member for Aberdeen said, that by that principle we not only get the advantage of one authority, but a rating power, in a manner not attainable in any other way. It is because of that, and because I know the need of education, because I appreciate its absolute value, both from an individual and a national point of view, that I am anxious that the great force of local patriotism should be brought to bear on the problems of education. The Borough Councils have done a great deal, and the London County Council has performed admirable work in regard to technical education. Lastly, I am extremely glad that the declaration has come from the President of the Local Government Board that amendments will be listened to, and others proposed, because the constitution of the Education Committee, as it at present stands, makes this Bill, from an educational and a local government point of view, absolutely impracticable. You first constitute an authority and then constitute a counter-authority by placing the authority in a minority on the Education Committee. That is an unworkable proposal. Therefore I vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, on the distinct understanding that these Amendments will be made, and that we shall have constituted a working authority for education in London. There are many other points involved—the selection of sites, the number of teachers transferred from post to post, and the recognition of their rights, on which we will work hard to have Amendments carried, and make the Bill a really practicable working measure.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 300; Noes, 163. (Division List No. 71).

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Ambrose, Robert
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Barry, Sir Fras. T. (*Windsor*)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg*)
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carew, James Laurence
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson, Charles Scott

Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (*City of Lond.*
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin&Nairn*
Gordon, Maj Evans (*TrH'mlets*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashf'rd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*)
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Joyce, Michael
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Leamy, Edmund
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Malcolm, Ian
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Mooney, John J.
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Myers, William Henry
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid*)
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. *Tipperary, N.*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, J. (*Roscommon, N.*)
O'Mara, James
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reddy, M.
Redmond, Jn. E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Roche, John
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. L. Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (*Liverpool*
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, H. C (*North'mb. Tyneside*
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxfd Univ.*
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (*Taunton*
Whitley, H (*Ashton-und.-Lyne*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(*Birm*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Geo. M. (*Edinburgh*)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster, Sir Michl. (*Lond. Univ*
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (*Berwick*
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristol, E.*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swans'a*
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, Sir William
Mellor, Rt. Hn. John William
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Morley, Rt Hon John (*Montrose*
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Palmer, G. Wm. (*Reading*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, J. A. (*Saffron Walden*)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C R. (*Northants*)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Taylor, Theodore C (*Radcliffe*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Williams, O. (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, Fred. W. (*Norfolk Mid.*
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

EVENING SITTING.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said his object in laying this subject again before the House was to bring the work upon which they had been engaged for so many years to a satisfactory conclusion. The London County Council and other local authorities were deeply interested in the question of workmen's trains, but owing to the difficulties which surrounded it they had been able to make only slight progress for many years in giving any reform. He therefore to-night made a suggestion in the shape of the Resolution which he had placed upon the Paper, which he hoped would commend itself to the House. He asked that a Committee might be appointed to inquire into the working and the administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883, and to report whether any, and, if so, what, Amendments were necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere, and to secure the provision of the accommodation required by workmen by all railway companies.

The Cheap Trains Act, upon which this Resolution was founded, was an Act which was generally misunderstood, because the condition of the railways had so entirely changed within the last twenty years. Many of those interested in workmen's trains thought that the Act of 1883 established the necessity for running these trains, but that was not the only object of the Act. One object of that Act was to relieve the railway companies from liabilities on certain conditions. Previously to the passing of this Act the railway companies were liable to a passenger duty of 5 per cent. on all their tickets, and the Act was very favourable to the companies in the respect that it relieved them from this huge responsibility. At the time the Act was passed they were paying a passenger duty of £700,000, and if that duty had continued to be payable they would now be paying £1,250,000, but as a matter of fact the amount now paid was £300,000 or £350,000 a year; therefore the railway companies had a relief, which went to the benefit of their revenue account, of something like £1,000,000 under the Cheap Trains Act of 1883. Now, if they had this relief it was important that the conditions under which it was obtained should be observed. On of those conditions was that sufficient accommodation should be given for third-class passengers at a fare not exceeding one penny per mile. He mentioned this fact because Members could hardly credit without it the fact that the railway companies, twenty years ago, were reluctant to make even such a concession. If it had been to the benefit of the companies one would have supposed that they would have reduced their fares without any stimulus, but that was a thing that the companies never did, and yet the third-class fares at a penny per mile, which was forced upon them, were most profitable to them. The second condition under which that relief was given was that proper and sufficient accommodation, by means of workmen's trains, should be furnished where such service was required. This was the obligation to which he desired to direct attention. That was one of the conditions on which this great relief of passenger duty was given, and while the companies had been most anxious to have that relief they had not fulfilled the conditions under which it was given.

The machinery of the Cheap Trains Act was most cumbrous. It was true that the Board of Trade could, if satisfied that there was not sufficient accommodation, order the company to provide it, but the company might insist upon taking the matter before the Railway Commission, which was a most expensive tribunal. The Cheap Trains Act provided that this accommodation by means of workmen's trains should be provided before eight o'clock in the morning and after six o'clock at night, but those provisions had become antiquated, and were not suited to the classes they were intended to benefit. The return journey by the workmen was not now performed after six o'clock in the evening. The longest part of that Act provided for cheap rates for the use of His Majesty's Forces, and in all respects save one the Act had been a great success. The part which dealt with workmen's trains was the only part in which it had been a failure, and it was in that respect that he desired to get it amended. During the twenty years since the passing of the Act there had been a total change in the time required. Workmen could no longer live near their work, and it was necessary that they should be carried to and from their work every day at times suitable to them.

The solution of the housing question rested, to a great extent, on suitable provision being made by the railway companies for the conveyance of the working classes, and that was shown by the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, which said—

> "In the public interest railways must carry workmen at whatever they can afford to pay."

Nobody denied that circumstances had changed and that these cheap workmen's trains had now become an absolute necessity. A Return in London was issued every year by the London County Council showing the number of trains which carried workmen in and out every day in the year. When the Act was passed, on the Great Eastern there were only twenty-three workmen's trains; they now ran 112. The London and South-Western then only ran twelve; they now ran seventy-five. The Metropolitan ran only twelve; they now ran seventy six. The District only ran eight or nine; and they now ran sixty-nine. That proved the tremendous growth in the demand, and also that some efforts had been made on the part of various companies to meet it. There came into London every day 801 workmen's trains, and 177 half-fare trains, or a total of 978 cheap trains, and the House would gain some idea of the enormous magnitude of the question when he told them that over the whole country something like 100,000,000 workmen's tickets were issued every year.

It might be argued that the statements he had made showed that there was no difficulty in meeting the demand, and no room for this Motion, but the fact was that the development of the service had really created new and great difficulties, and it was for that reason that he thought that the House might be able to do something to smooth the way in certain respects by consenting to this Committee. The workmen's trains had been furnished very unequally. There was no adequate service except on a few of the lines. For example, the Great Eastern gave a much better and more efficient service of workmen's trains than any other company. But the result was that at stations served by that line, a state of congestion arose which rivalled that of London itself. In the districts of Tottenham and Edmonton and other places the rates were as high as in London, and the death rate was quite as high, and the condition of these colonies of workmen on the Great Eastern system was as bad as it was before they moved out of London at all. It was a curious thing that most of the complaints had been made with regard to those companies which, at the first blush, would seem to have done their best in these services, but the fact was that workmen had been tempted to live in these districts because the service existed, and when the population increased that had given rise to great difficulty.

On the Great Eastern and the London and Tilbury line there was a most disgraceful overcrowding. So great was it that it was a common thing for small boys, telegraph messengers and the like, to be put up on the hat racks and carried in that way because the number of the trains was totally inadequate. No separate accommodation was made for women, and the overcrowding was a disgrace to civilisation. This resulted in many people coming up to work an hour or two before it was necessary. There were other forms of tyranny with regard to these services of workmen's trains; for instance, his attention had been drawn to a ticket which was issued for one of these services. These tickets were issued by the week in bundles, and upon the particular ticket which he had in his hand there was a mark which showed that it was available only for one of two trains, and if the person who had it did not travel by that train he could not travel by any other or get his money back.

When these matters were considered, hon. Members would be bound to agree that, even in face of the service that was given, there was no adequate accommodation. What was the reason for these evils, and how were they to deal with the difficulties which he had described? There were only certain railways which furnished the accommodation, and a great number of railways in the north and west of London furnished no trains at all. While the Great Eastern Railway gave 120 trains a day, the Great Northern Railway only ran twelve trains a day; the Midland five, and the Great Central none at all. Though the congestion existed only in one part of the suburbs, the other districts round London were inaccessible to workmen, even if the houses were built, because they had no travelling accommodation. No company would argue that they should not supply a train where the workmen were, but they might well argue that here was a case where the workmen were not, and that was the point to which he wished to come—that was the problem he wished the Committee to solve. The suggestion which he desired to make was that before eight o'clock in the morning railway companies should be compelled to issue workmen's tickets by ordinary trains; so that, if only twelve or twenty tickets were wanted they could be furnished, and thus the traffic might be gradually developed, which might presently warrant a special train for itself as provided by the Act of 1883. That suggestion had been made before, and that suggestion he now repeated. The Act only spoke of trains; he spoke of tickets. When he made this suggestion to the House before, there was a distinguished representative of the railway companies present, who was now in the House of Lords, but who then moved the rejection of the Cheap Trains Bill of 1900. That gentleman, Mr. Jackson, in the course of his speech, said with regard to that suggestion—

> "If that suggestion had come before me on a former occasion, I would have given it what I will give it now, the most favourable consideration."

And he went on to suggest that the solution of the difficulty might be found on that basis. Not only had speculative promises been made to consider this matter, but certain companies had already adopted this system. The South-Eastern and Chatham line already issued tickets at workmen's rates, available by all its trains up to eight o'clock, and the Great Western Railway had adopted the same system, issuing workmen's tickets up to 7.30. Under those circumstances, it was ridiculous to say that the railway companies could not meet the Committee if such a suggestion was made.

The experience of those who were interested in this matter showed that the difficulties raised by the railway companies had been much exaggerated. In one case the London Reform Union had brought an action against the Great Northern Railway Company, and had convinced the Railway Commissioners that a service ought to be given, but the Railway Commissioners were so struck by the arguments of the company that they only made a provisional order for six months that two trains should be supplied. When the trains were put on the passengers were counted, and it was found that in the first train there were 250 passengers, while in the second there were 449 who travelled every day, and when those figures were worked out, the average daily receipts per train mile of those two trains was found to be 52·75 of a penny, a result which showed that these two trains were more profitable than the ordinary third class traffic of the Company. Indeed so profitable were they, that at the end of six months no suggestion was made to take them off, and the service has been continued to this day.

The Manchester Corporation had made an inquiry of the same kind. The railway companies round Manchester also objected to put on cheap trains, and the Manchester Corporation made an inquiry into the rates which the companies round Manchester charged for third-class season tickets issued for the year, and they found that the season tickets were issued at ·176 of a penny per train mile, while the average by workmen's tickets worked out at ·263 of a penny per train mile, so that the companies really would find these workmen's trains much more remunerative than the service which they furnished at the present time. The House therefore need not hesitate to bring pressure to bear upon the railway companies and he might point out that there were precedents for it, because whenever a new Tramways Bill passed the House, a model clause was forced from the company to give that accommodation which he now asked should be furnished by the railway companies. All the new Tube Railway Bills for London, which have recently been passed by this House, contain such a clause. He thought that was some evidence that the course they were suggesting could be adopted by the railway companies without injury to their other arrangements. If new companies could afford to do it why could not the old ones?

He had only to add that the Resolution, in his opinion, was an exceedingly moderate one. All they did was to ask for an inquiry. There had been no inquiry for twenty years, and if they had one now it would be open to the companies to state their views and difficulties after the workmen had made their claims. He had every hope that the result of such an inquiry would be to find a solution of the difficulty and help to solve other great social problems. He hoped that the Amendment, which he admitted was not conceived in any hostile spirit, would not be pressed. He was simply asking for accommodation which could be given without the necessity for running new trains, while the Amendment asked for new trains to be run. He appealed to the President of the Board of Trade, who had shown his sympathy in this matter, and who was placed on the horns of a dilemma, having on one side the railway companies and on the other side the working classes, to give favourable consideration to the Motion.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.) said that in seconding the Motion he desired, in the first instance, to dissociate himself altogether from any wish to see anything unfair in the slightest degree urged against the railway companies. He fully realised that those people who had invested their savings in these companies, under the ægis of the Government, had as much right to protection from the House as those who travelled by their lines. But he thought the House would realise that, owing to the change which had taken place since the Act now in operation was passed, it was desirable something should be done in the interests of both the railway companies and of the working men throughout the country. When the first Bill dealing with that question was brought before the House of Commons, by no less important a personage than that great statesman, Sir Robert Peel, he said that nothing but hard necessity would induce him to derive income from locomotion, and he added that the poor man's labour was his capital, and to tax him for bringing it into the market seemed to him impolitic and unjust. He took it there was a great necessity for something to be done, because, bound up with this question of cheap transit, were the questions of housing, wages, and hours of toil, which could not possibly be dissociated from it In dealing, therefore, with the Resolution, they were really dealing practically with the basis of all their great social difficulties at the present moment. He knew it was urged that, because a certain number of people were obliged to live near their work, there would be no relief so far as housing was concerned. But he thought quite the contrary was the case. The fact that men employed in given trades must live in the vicinity of their work made it all the more desirable that those who could live a certain distance away should be induced to do so. The complaint which they had to make against the Board of Trade was not that it had not closely followed the letter of the law, but that it had not made any sufficiently strenuous attempts to assist the working classes in this direction, and that it had not taken the initiative, although the Royal Commission on Housing held that it was its duty to do so.

In regard to this very problem the last occasion on which His Majesty the King spoke, prior to his ascent to the Throne, he stated that he felt the deepest personal interest in the question, and even the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom they were now told to look upon as the good fairy of the Conservative Government, had stated that the only solution of the difficulty was the finding of sites so that the people could live outside London. One of the reasons why they considered that this question should be now dealt with was to be found in the different action taken by different railway companies. As had been pointed out by his hon. friend, the Great Eastern Railway Company took a man out to Enfield and back, a distance of twenty-one and-a-half miles, at a cost of 1s. per week, or 2d. per day, while on certain other lines serving the same district the charge was two or three times that amount. He was well aware that the Great Eastern Company was exceptionally placed and had to deal with a very large traffic. It could therefore make it pay. But why could not the other railway companies also make it pay? That fact alone showed the necessity for an inquiry into the position of each company, so that each case might be judged on its merits.

His hon. friend had alluded to the fact that twenty years had elapsed since the question was first dealt with. In that period the growth of London had been altogether extraordinary, and the population had increased at the rate of 40,000 or 50,000 per annum. Between eight and ten thousand houses were built in the London area every year, and, seeing that within the last decade the addition to the population of the Metropolis had exceeded the population of the capitals of either Ireland or Scotland, surely it was time that they tackled the question. In the town of Leicester, where also there had been an abnormal growth in the population, the difficulty had been dealt with in great measure by the very excellent tramway system which had been established there. But in London there were other difficulties to be faced. New trades and occupations had grown up, and now-a-days large numbers of women and young girls, mostly the wives and daughters of well-to-do mechanics, were engaged in certain trades in the Metropolis, and crowded into the City every day. It was of supreme importance that better accommodation should be provided for them. When they reflected that a large proportion of the population of London earned only about £1 a week, and that many even had to pay one-seventh of their income for railway tickets, it must be realised that something ought to be done for them. Some of the railway companies had met their responsibilities fairly; others had not. His hon. friend had referred to the Tilbury case. Now, that particular company, at a time when it was neglecting its responsibilities, was getting as much as £9,000 per annum out of the abatement of passenger duty. He was reminded that they were not doing very much even now. They had traded on the fact that there had been certain difficulties with reference to bridges and level crossings, which had brought them more or less into conflict with the local authorities, and consequently the working classes were placed in a most difficult position. Those who knew anything of London life knew that these classes had a terrible struggle for existence. They had neither the money nor the leisure to enable them to combine in order to bring their case under the notice of the Board of Trade, while the local authorities shirked the duty because they knew they would be forced to go before that expensive tribunal, the Railway Commission. Certain objections were usually urged by the railway companies against doing what they were asked to do. First, they said they could not put on more trains. That was perfectly true, so far as certain railway systems were concerned, but might not a solution be found in the direction of putting on more coaches to certain trains. It had been shown that that would not be unprofitable, because undoubtedly third class traffic was a source of great profit to the companies. He frankly acknowledged that the companies' expenses had increased of late years; that they now had to pay higher wages for shorter hours, and that in addition the travelling public demanded much better accommodation in every form than was required twenty years ago.

The companies suggested that they were sometimes called upon to run trains into the wilderness, into new districts, in the hope that traffic might arise. He did not think, however, that that was altogether the case. The majority of the complaints put forward were not open to that criticism. He would like to refer to cases which had been brought under his notice. The first was with reference to the train service from Thornton Heath. The last workman's train from that place to London Bridge was 7.2 a.m., and to Victoria 7. 14. The people of the district made an appeal to the London, Brighton and South Coast Company asking for weekly tickets, monthly season tickets, and third-class season tickets, but the company refused to grant any one of the concessions. It was also asked that the workmen's tickets should be made available up to 8 a.m., the same as on the London and South-Western Company's line, but that concession was likewise refused. He was informed by the persons aggrieved that the Member for the Division (Mr. Ritchie) had been approached in the matter, but had replied that he could not do anything. Now he would give them a case from the country. It was in the Rhondda Valley, where there was a large congestion of population. Yet nine miles off 1,300 houses were vacant, and although the Barry Railway Company had been appealed to again and again to run a cheap train morning and night in order to enable people to occupy those houses, it had so far turned a deaf ear to all representations. Another objection raised by the company was that persons who were not entitled travelled by the workmen's train. To his mind that was one of the reasons why they should have an investigation. It was not impossible to overcome the difficulty. It had been done in other countries. In Belgium the working man could travel within the twenty-five miles zone on a weekly ticket for the sum of 1s. 8d., and he could travel a distance of eight miles for the sum of 10d. per week. Special facilities, too, were provided for the carriage of his bicycle. The men who took advantage of those tickets had to prove they were manual labourers working under the direction of others. He did not say that a similar system would be suited to this country, but in France a plan obtained which might be made applicable here. There only men travelled by these trains who were not taxed upon more than 2,000 francs (or £80) a year. These were men in practically the same position as non-payers of income tax in this country. There were undoubtedly large numbers of men here who ought to have the privilege of travelling by the cheap trains who were not engaged in manual labour, for instance, shop assistants, clerks, etc.

Again, he thought something might be done to cheapen the cost of appeals. He could not agree that railway and tram companies stood on practically the same footing in this matter, because it should be remembered that tram lines travelled over public property and paid no rates. But he was fortified in all he had said by the fact that he had the Prime Minister on his side. Some time ago, when this matter was under discussion, he wrote some letters to the Press, and one appeared from the Prime Minister pointing out, in connection with the housing question, that his view was that the solution was to be found in the improvement of locomotion. The right hon. Gentleman referred particularly to radiating causeways or thoroughfares. Of course, they could not wait for the establishment of these, as many years must elapse before a system of that kind could be developed, but in the meantime the pressure in London in regard to the housing difficulty was enormous, and he ventured to urge that the Government might very reasonably grant an inquiry, which would place things on a fair basis, both for the railway companies and for the workers, until an ideal system could be developed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883; and to report whether any, and, if so, what, Amendments are necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere and to secure the provisions of the accommodation required by workmen by all railway companies."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said he was sure the House would recognise the moderation of the tone in which the Motion had been brought forward and the adequate recognition of the great difficulty in the way of anything like a very drastic treatment of the subject. So far as he was qualified to speak for the railway companies, he might say that they really courted inquiry on this question, and the only point was as to the conditions under which the inquiry should take place, what should be the terms of reference, and what matters should be taken to be assumed and pre-judged before the inquiry was entered upon. For that purpose it was necessary to have regard to some of the difficulties which the inquiry would have to face at its start. The hon. Member who brought the Motion forward had spoken as if it were the fact that the remitted passenger duty had found its way entirely into the pockets of the railway shareholders. But that was very far from being the case. Nearly the whole of it went into the pockets of the passengers. He believed that the difference between the actual amount remitted and the sum which found its way into the pockets of the passengers was infinitesimal, and even that small advantage was more than absorbed in the reduction of fares for the carrying of His Majesty's forces at low rates, and in the provision of workmen's trains.

The hon. Member for Islington had complained that the machinery under the existing Acts was cumbrous. If that were so the railway companies were not to blame, but it was, of course, a proper subject for enquiry. With regard to the complaints of overcrowding and the necessity for issuing season tickets or tickets for short periods, they ought also to have the full facts investigated. Then, as to the failure to start workmen's trains right up to eight o'clock in the morning, looking at the statute he did not see there was any obligation on the companies to do anything of the kind. Next, with regard to the comparison drawn between the mile receipts for ordinary and for workmen's trains, he did not think the figures quoted to the House should stand unchallenged, because it should be remembered that the receipts were worked out with regard to the whole system, and that while some parts of lines cost, for construction, but a small sum per mile, another piece of line might have cost at least £1,000,000 sterling. The railway companies had more than endeavoured to fulfil their statutory obligations in this matter. His information was that the Great Eastern Company, which had been required by Parliament to run five workmen's trains, had really run 189 trains; the Brighton Company, which was required to run none, nevertheless ran sixty-nine; the Central London Company, which was required to run "a sufficient number," had run fifty-five; the South-Western, which was required to run none, had run 133; the North London, required to run one, had run thirty-nine; and the Metropolitan, required to run two, had run 100; and so forth. If that was the spirit in which the companies had met their obligations, it was a sufficient guarantee that they would do all they could to assist the House to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion to the inquiry. The suggestion which he had to make, and which he hoped would be received in the friendly spirit in which it was submitted, was that after the words "amendments are" in the Motion the words "reasonable and" should be inserted, thus instructing the Committee to report what amendments were reasonable and necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains. This would prevent the inquiry being obliged to go into such suggestions as that people should be carried at the rate of 4d. for forty miles, or that the companies should be required to exploit and develop, at their own risk, new districts of a purely speculative character.

He moved the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'are,' to insert the words 'reasonable and.'"—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) congratulated his hon. friend both on the moderation of his statement and on the way in which it had been received by the representatives of the railway companies. He wished to point out that the question of providing workmen's trains was only a part of the subject. They must all recognise that their railway accommodation had become quite inadequate to carry the great and increasing traffic which had been thrown upon it. The question was one of the first importance to the railway companies themselves; it was a question which involved great expense, and, above all, it was a question which affected the condition and the health of the poorer part of the population. It might, therefore, be thought worth while to consider whether a larger scope might not be given to the proposed inquiry. He was not going to make any Motion to that effect, because if it was done it should be done at the suggestion of the Government. They were now approaching an era as important in the matter of communication as that which arose between 1830 and 1846, when the foundation of the railway system was laid. They had brought a new motive power into action, electricity, which was beginning to compete with steam, and which, in some countries, had reached a far greater development than that which had taken place here. In Lombardy, round Milan, and in Boston, in America, there had been great development of the electric system of communication, such as was quite unknown in England, but nevertheless, owing to the development of additional traffic the railways had not been seriously affected. What was wanted in England was a system under which provision should be made for long distance travelling at high speed with few stoppages, and also for traffic with frequent stoppages, which latter could best be done by electric trams. He did not himself believe that these means of rapid and cheap communication would be the ultimate solution of their difficulties on this question ; he looked more to the transfer of industries from the crowded cities to healthier surroundings, where towns could be laid out in more healthy conditions, but he believed that more rapid means of travel would be a partial remedy. He suggested, therefore, that it might be desirable that the inquiry should be empowered to go into the larger aspects of the question, so as to cover, for other communities, a field similar to that being covered for London by the London Traffic Commission.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said the question of facilitating communication between great centres of population and the country districts was fully recognised as one of enormous importance, and he also recognised that it had an important bearing on the subject immediately before the House. At the same time he thought it would be a pity to mix up the greater question with the narrower, but undoubtedly germane, question of the amendments which it might be desirable to introduce into the Act of 1883 with the view of doing what they could to solve the problem by means of that legislation. There appeared to be practical unanimity in the House with respect to the advisability of an inquiry of this kind. He entirely agreed. It was twenty years now since the Act was passed, and he thought it was high time there should be an inquiry. At the same time, he should like to say on his own behalf that he did not think too much should be expected of the inquiry which the hon. Member proposed. He did not think, as a matter of fact, that experience had shown that the administration of the Act had been a failure. He did not think hon. Members could point to any case, for instance, where a *primâ facie* case had been made out of insufficient and inadequate provision of trains by a railway company in which the Board of Trade had not immediately expressed its willingness to inquire into the subject, and, where inquiries had taken place, they had, in the vast majority of cases, resulted in an order being made, and being loyally observed by the railway companies, for the provision of a larger number of workmen's trains. If they took the last five years alone there had been 38 applications under the Act, and out of these all but seven, he thought, were successful. The hon. Member who moved the Motion himself bore witness in effect to the successful working of the Act, because he told the House that there were now no less than 801 workmen's trains running daily into the Metropolis, and that 100,000,000 workmen's tickets were issued every year. It might be that the problem still remained to be solved; but what these figures showed was not that the Act of 1883 had not so far been successful, but rather the enormous magnitude of the problem, and he suggested that it was not to the Act of 1883 alone, or to an Amendment of that Act, that they could look for a final or satisfactory solution of this problem. He was sure, and he thought any inquiry would prove, that in a large number of cases it was really physically impossible for the great railway companies to do more than they had done. They must look for the solution of this question to the development of other forms of traction. As regarded the Metropolis, the question was already before the Royal Commission; and he trusted that a great many of the matters which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen would wish to see inquired into, as they affected every large centre of population, would be inquired into. As regarded the Metropolis, it was to tramways, tube-railways, and other means of communication they must look for a final, or at all events, a more satisfactory, solution of the problem. But, as he had said, he recognised that there were a great many matters which, after twenty years experience, might be usefully inquired into. He was not prepared, however, to say off-hand that he should concur in the suggestions made by the hon. mover of the Amendment, though, of course, those suggestions were matters which it would be proper to bring before the inquiry which was about to take place. Both the mover and the seconder of the Motion appeared to think the merits or demerits of a company could be measured by the number of workmen's trains that it ran. That was a most misleading criterion. It was not, under the existing law, the duty of a railway company to provide accommodation for a traffic that did not exist, or for a speculative traffic. While he was not prepared to assert it might not be desirable that in some way or another means should be taken either to induce or to compel railway companies to provide for a traffic before that traffic existed, to provide speculatively, if that were done he was most distinctly of opinion that it ought not to be done at the expense of the railway shareholders. Various ways might be suggested. Local authorities might be empowered, where they considered it was desirable to encourage a traffic, to make a grant-in-aid to the railway companies. Or the owners of house property might make arrangements with the railway companies, by which the tenants of houses owned by them should be taken to and from their work at very low rates. But, in any case, having regard to the bargain which was entered into between the State and the railway companies in 1883, if the railway companies were to be compelled to run trains before those trains were likely to be remunerative, some means should be found by which the burden ought not to fall upon the shareholders. That was one of the matters which he thought might very properly be inquired into by a Committee. There were others which suggested themselves to him, but, in view of the unanimous feeling shown on both sides of the House, he did not think it was necessary that he should take up the time of hon. Members further. He would only say that the Government gladly and willingly accepted the Motion.

Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W. R., Keighley) said he desired to bring before the notice of the House one of the seven applications which had been refused by the Local Government Board, and he would then leave it to the House to say whether some further inquiry should have been made. The case he alluded to was that of a town where it was thought necessary to have an inquiry held by the Board of Trade. Many Bills had been introduced for cheap trains, but none had ever come to anything. In the case he referred to he advised the parties to make an application to the Board of Trade to ascertain if something could not be done. There were about 1,000 persons going to work every day who were concerned, and the price for travelling was about ½d. per mile. This might be considered low, but compared with other countries it was about one-half more. In this case, the Board of Trade held an inquiry and the railway companies were represented. It was very conclusively shown that the workmen were wanted, and that the high cost of the train fare had a very serious result in reducing the number of apprentices, because, as they would have to begin with very low wages, the railway fares made it almost impossible to allow those boys to travel to and fro in order to learn a trade. It was also shown that if the railway companies lowered the fares it would in the end have the effect of benefiting the companies. The whole matter was submitted to the Board of Trade, and they came to the conclusion that nothing could be done. He had great pleasure in supporting the Resolution before the House for the purpose of having a further inquiry into this matter in order to facilitate better communication between towns and country places.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said if there was such unanimity in the House of Commons and outside as to the necessity for an inquiry into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, surely the Board of Trade, who were in possession of all the information upon the question, need not have waited for a Motion in the House in order to come to the conclusion that this matter was ripe for inquiry. The same inaction had characterised the Board of Trade in regard to the necessity for an inquiry into the question of the London traffic. That was a matter which was urgent in the highest degree, but it was not until the antiquated procedure of the House of Commons had brought the matter to his notice, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade discovered that the question was so urgent as to become the subject of a Royal Commission. He regarded with some suspicion the adjective introduced into the Motion, for he knew that in practice the word "reasonable" very often became unreasonable. The Motion before the House was one which affected not merely workmen, but a class who were no better paid than mechanics, namely, clerks. He hoped the Committee to be appointed would be careful to see that no definition was accepted which would exclude the clerks, who deserved as much as workmen the benefits of cheap transit. The point which the right hon. Gentleman for Aberdeen had raised, as to whether this Commission should not take a much wider scope, was one which he begged the House to further consider. He was aware this was a very great subject, but if it embraced the various subjects which had been mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, they would gain a lasting advantage from having before them materials to decide what measures were necessary to get the railway companies to do something to remove congestion from our towns. He hoped that not much more than a year would elapse before a substantial improvement was made in the law in regard to cheap transit for the working classes.

*MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said he wished to say two or three words to remove some misconception which he thought might otherwise arise from the speech of the mover of this Motion. The question affected the London suburban lines far more than the Trunk lines converging on the Metropolis. He had the honour of being the Chairman of a railway company in London which carried the largest number of workmen—he referred to the District Railway. This railway ten years ago only carried, of its 45,000,000 passengers, 3,000,000 workmen under the Cheap Trains Act. The policy had recently been instituted of encouraging the workmen to travel by extending the time for booking, by giving them the opportunity of travelling by every train run by the Company up to eight o'clock, and by permitting them to return, not after six o'clock, when the trains were congested, but practically at any time of the day. It was more convenient to have the workmen coming back even in the middle of the day than to have them crowding into the trains at busy times. The trouble was that everybody wanted to come home at the same time. There would be no difficulty at all if the period of return home were only extended over a longer time. The result of this sound economic policy was that, instead of carrying 3,000,000 workmen under the conditions of ten years ago, the company last year carried 10,500,000 of workmen over the District Railway alone, the average cost being a trifle over three farthings each. He wished to point out to some of his friends who so warmly advocated cheap fares that this meant that the railway company practically worked for twenty-seven minutes for each working man passenger, for this was the average length of his journey, for three farthings. If they asked any working man to work twenty-seven minutes for three farthings he would refuse to do so. He thought, however, that the Committee ought to consider the interests of the shareholders to some extent. He knew railway shareholders were not very popular with some sections of his hon. riends, and shareholders in other industries appeared to receive far more sympathy. The time might perhaps come when Parliament would fix by statute the price of the commodity sold by some of the industrial limited companies with which some of his friends were acquainted. His right hon. friend the Member for Aberdeen had referred to the traffic in the city of Boston, but he had omitted to state to the House, probably by oversight, that there was no fare in the City of Boston under 5 cents, or 2½d. If the right hon. Gentleman happened to be a shareholder in the railways he had mentioned he would find that the policy of running competitive cheap trains had not been the success which he had anticipated. The Board of Trade had acted wisely in not widening the scope of the inquiry. Many hon. Members held the view that the principle of favouring a particular class of the community was not a very sound one. On the District Railway prosperous meat salesmen at Smithfield, fruit buyers at Covent Garden, and even members of the Bar claimed to be *bonâ fide* workmen. He asked hon. Members to compare this class of passenger claiming to travel an average distance of four miles every morning for ¾d., with the shop girl who had to get to business in Regent Street or a City warehouse by 8·30 in the morning. She was not earning anything like the wages of the class he had mentioned, and yet she was compelled to pay from 1½d. to 1¾d. for the same commodity which the railway company was obliged to sell to the workmen at ¾d. Parliament never attempted in the Cheap Trains Act to tell them what a workman was, and if the Committee which had been promised attempted it they would not get their report for many a long year to come. He thought railway companies would have to consider whether the fair and democratic system adopted in the great cities of America, in Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, and Paris is not the right one—namely, to charge a uniform rate for everybody—not to favour a particular class or pander to any section of the community, but to say that everybody shall travel at the same rate. There was no defence or equitable ground for the present system of carrying 10,000,000 people at ¾d. and put the balance of the cost of working the railway and giving to the shareholders what hon. Members said they ought to have, namely, a moderate return on passengers who could, many of them, not so easily afford to pay a higher rate.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) congratulated the mover of the Motion upon the unanimity with which his proposal had been received. He wished to know if the term "elsewhere" meant that the inquiry could be extended to Ireland. He urged that the scope of the inquiry should be so enlarged as to allow the advisability of extending the provisions of the Act to Ireland. As an Irishman, he was anxious that the benefits of this Bill should accrue to Ireland, and there was no place in the United Kingdom which required cheap trains so much as the city of Dublin, where the death-rate was nearly as high as any city in the United Kingdom. This was largely due to the overcrowding of the people in the slums of the city. The reason was that they had not the advantage of the provisions of such an Act as this. He appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to extend the scope of the inquiry, so as to enable the Committee to consider the advisability of extending the present Act to Ireland.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said it might seem a little ungracious in the general harmony which prevailed to question the policy of the Motion when a public Department had so readily acceded to the request of his hon. friend. This question raised an important point of principle. The Motion was founded on the suggestion that the existing machinery was inadequate to afford full information to Parliament of the working of the existing Act, and that therefore some further investigation must take place in order that reform might be effected. He did not want in the least degree to mitigate the feeling of congratulation so generally expressed that this Motion had been accepted by the President of the Board of Trade, but he would point out that his hon. friend the Member for West Islington must not congratulate himself too much on the position he now occupied. He was to have a Committee, and when at some time or other the scope of the investigation had been sufficiently widened to take in all the topics suggested, there would no doubt be a report, and if that report proposed some reform in the law, owing to the congested condition of Parliamentary business, the remedy would be thrown over for an indefinite period. He wished to point out that under the existing statute, if the Board of Trade had the courage to apply it, they had a complete remedy for the present state of things. The President of the Board of Trade had indicated the embarrassed position in which he stood owing to the machinery of the Act. The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to have read one of the main clauses. He adopted a construction of one of the sections according to which the railway companies, of their own motion, might throw the duty of inquiry on the Railway Commissioners, and oust the function of inquiry which the statute properly cast upon the Board of Trade. As he himself understood the section, the railway companies had no such right. The Board of Trade had complete control over the investigation which the travelling public demanded.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR indicated dissent.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said the words of the section were—

> "The Board of Trade may make such inquiry as they think necessary, or may, if required by the companies, or any of the companies concerned, refer the matter for the decision of the Railway Commissioners——"

Therefore, it was a power given to the Board of Trade to refer the matter to the Railway Commissioners if required.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the meaning of the word "required?"

MR. LAWSON WALTON said the word "required" in that context meant "requested." If Parliament had meant to say that at the request or requirement of a railway company the powers conferred on the Board of Trade were to be displaced it would have used the word "shall" instead of "may." From the acceptance of the Motion by the President of the Board of Trade, he was entitled to infer that the Board considered that insufficient trains were provided, and that inquiry was necessary, and if that was so why did not the Board of their own motion direct that inquiry should take place? Why was Parliament left to move in this matter? He only hoped that this inquiry would give some satisfaction to those interested in the matter, but he would point out that the responsibility of the Board of Trade was not taken away by this. If the inquiry was protracted for months, or it might be years, the evil would exist. He knew a case where a disastrous accident occurred to one of these trains. A number of passengers were killed and a large number injured, and the jury appended to their verdict that the gravity of the accident was largely increased by the gross overcrowding of the train. Why was there not in that case an inquiry directed by the Board of Trade?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It does not follow that the proper cure for that is to run more trains, nor does it follow that that would be possible.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said the statute gave the right hon. Gentleman power to indicate when the trains were to be run, the fares to be charged, and the stations at which the trains were to stop.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not wish to bandy words with the hon. and learned Gentleman, but it may be physically impossible between seven and half-past seven to run more than seven trains, and there may be a larger number of workmen anxious to travel than trains can be provided for.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said that was possible, but did the right hon. Gentleman investigate this particular case? That was a purely hypothetical solution which the right hon. Gentleman had stated. Under the Act of Parliament the right hon. Gentleman had sweeping powers, and his responsibility was not discharged by casting the labour of investigation on a Parliamentary Committee.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) congratulated the hon. Member for West Islington on having stuck to his point, and on the able manner in which he had brought it before the House. The travelling facilities provided for workmen, in view of the conditions of modern life, were of vital importance These facilities were very much bound up with the question of the housing of the working classes. In the county which he represented the question had been very well solved. The two railway companies which served the district were carrying workmen conveniently and comfortably at the rate of 1d. for thirteen miles, and he had it on the best authority that the companies were making a handsome profit out of it. Therefore, there need be no fear that the shareholders would suffer.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the House of Commons was extremely indebted to the hon. and learned Member for South Leeds for his intervention in this debate, and for giving the benefit of the experience he had gained in another quarter. Under the Act the Board of Trade had powers which should have been exercised long before this Motion was put on the Paper. It might seem ungracious to look a gift horse in the mouth, but he thought the gift which the President of the Board of Trade had offered might have been given much sooner. He held that overcrowding was a test of insufficiency, whether of trains or platforms, and he saw no reason why third-class passengers should be compelled to travel twelve, fourteen, and sixteen in a compartment, when the first-class were wholly empty, and the second-class only half full. The example of two railway companies, who, in the case of overcrowding, permitted girls and women to get into first and second class carriages in which there was room, might be followed by other companies. The Board of Trade might also impress upon the railway companies that cheap fares pay. Whilst the Committee was inquiring, he hoped the Bills for the extension of electric tramways, promoted by the London County Council and other local authorities for the public convenience, would be supported and not opposed in the short-sighted way they had been in the past. He trusted that one result of the discussion would be to instigate the railway companies to do their duty, and that some hon. Members who persistently opposed the Tramway Bills of the London County Council and other local authorities, promoted for the public convenience, would cease from that opposition in the future.

*Mr. LOUGH said that with the permission of the House he wished, in response to an appeal made to him by the hon. Member for Staffordshire, to say that the statement with regard to the Great Central Railway Company not running workmen's trains, although literally true, was explained by the fact that they had no suburban traffic, and therefore no facilities for giving the accommodation to which he had referred. He had promised the hon. Baronet to make this explanation, and he very gladly did so.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883; and to report whether any, and, if so, what, Amendments are reasonable and necessary to improve the service of workmen's trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere, and to secure the provision of the accommodation required by workmen by all railway companies.

CROWN LANDS IN WALES.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said he rose to call attention to the administration of Crown Lands in Wales; and to move, "That this House regrets that the Government have not taken steps to carry out the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, that a Commission, the members of which should have the powers of Judges of the High Court of Justice, should be appointed to survey the Crown Lands in Wales and Monmouthshire, and to make an extent of the rents, dues, etc., payable from such Crown Lands, and is of opinion that sales of such Crown Lands should cease except where necessary in the public interest, and that they should be afforested wherever desirable and practicable."

He desired at the outset to say that in moving this Motion he was not inspired by any desire to complain of the conduct of the Commission of Woods and Forests.

Attention having been drawn to the fact that forty Members were not present, and numbers being counted, and a quorum being made—

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES resumed his speech. He did not desire to say anything in complaint of the conduct of the Commission of Woods and Forests, which was specially charged with the administration of the Crown lands in Wales. Mr. Stafford Howard, to his personal knowledge, had discharged his duties with very great tact, had generally exhibited a sympathetic spirit, and had taken great pains to acquaint himself with the local circumstances of the Welsh tenants with whom he had to deal. But that gentleman and the Commission of Woods and Forests had for many years been bound down by general and traditional rules which have prevailed in regard, not only to that part of the Crown estates, but the whole of the hereditary possessions of the Crown. He wished to call attention to the fact that for a long series of years the Government had been guilty of great laxity and neglect in regard to the possessions of the Crown in Wales, and that the present Government in particular had failed to carry out the unanimous and, as he ventured to think, the reasonable recommendations of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire. The Government had, in fact, sinned against the light.

The Report of the Welsh Land Commission had been blamed for its length, and for being too detailed. They had been condemned for having gone in some respects beyond their province. He did not admit that any one of these offences could be justly laid to their charge; but the Report was made in 1896, and there was not the slightest evidence that the Government had taken the trouble to consider their recommendations, whether wise or not, or to consider the evidence and the facts on which these recommendations were made. One of these recommendations was that a Commission, having the powers of a Judge of High Court of Justice should be appointed to make a survey of the Crown Lands in Wales, and also to have the power to make an extent of the rents and dues and other payments paid by the tenants in Wales to the Crown. The Government had not done anything to carry out the recommendation. He had read the Annual Reports of the Department of Woods and Forests, and though he found traces in them that the views of the Land Commission had received attention, and that there had been some modification of the policy of the Department in consequence of the Report of the Land Commission, he did not find any evidence, either in these Reports or in anything that had been said by the Members of the Government, to show that they had endeavoured to carry out this recommendation, or had even considered whether it ought or ought not to be carried out. Now it might be said, and he quite agreed, that that was a strong recommendation, because the Statutory Commission, with the powers of a Judge of the High Court, would have a right to ask for the production of title-deeds, and the right to settle boundaries of estates; but he would like the House to notice that it was not a recommendation of some wild Radical like John Griffiths, or Richard Jones, but the recommendation of three great landlords, Lord Carrington, Lord Kenyon, and Sir John Trevelyan, who were strong supporters of the Government; it was the recommendation of economists and scholars like Dr. Frederick Seebohm, Principal Rhys of Oxford, and Mr. Groom, ex-Chairman of the County Council of Monmouth. It was therefore a recommendation, he ventured to say, which any Government ought to take into its most serious consideration.

Now, it might be asked why the Commission made this particular recommendation. To give a complete answer to that would involve a relation of all the circumstances under which these Crown lands in Wales had become part of the hereditary dominions of the King of England. He would content himself only by saying that the first and principal reason was the fact that they discovered from the evidence of Mr. Russell Sowrey, and other persons, that there was no proper information at the disposal of the Department of Woods and Forests as to the boundaries of the Crown estates in Wales, or as to the rents issuing from them; and that the Department was really in a very difficult position in regard to the enforcement of any claim against these Estates. Of course, from a legal point of view the Department was right in treating these estates as being one parcel of a great amount of land which it had to administer. But the Welsh people, owing to historic and other circumstances which he could not give in detail, did not agree with the simple legal view of the Department, and the view which had been taken by Government after Government, Liberal as well as Conservative. They regarded these Crown lands, owing to their special history, as Welsh national property, in the development of which Welshmen were vitally interested as a nation, separate from other nationalities in this island. They might be right or wrong in that, and he would not argue the point that night. What was the position of the estates at the present moment? So far as the Welsh Land Commission could gather from the evidence—and their chief authority was the principal clerk to the Department of Woods and Forests—the acreage of unenclosed land in Wales belonging to the Crown in 1894 was 84,100 acres. And there was beside that a considerable quantity of enclosed land which the Crown had acquired in various ways from time to time. The Crown had also mineral rights over something like 300,000 acres of land in Wales. The return from these lands amounted to about £21,000 per annum. Everyone would agree that an estate of that kind was an important estate, the management of which the Welsh Members were reasonably entitled to bring under the notice of the House. But the recommendation of the Commission was not founded simply and solely upon what they gathered as to the number of acres belonging to the Crown, and upon facts forced upon them by the people, and by the order of reference given to the Commission. He would go back to the year 1787, when some kind of attempt was made on the part of the Crown authorities to discharge their duties in regard to these lands. Since 1787 no less than 279,791 acres of Crown land in Wales had been sold. Had there been no such sales the Crown would at this moment have had in Wales more than 200,000 acres of land free from all rights of commonage, and 150,000 acres subject to rights of commonage. Taking the area of Wales and Monmouth at 5,120,000 acres, the Crown would now have had but for these sales one fourteenth of the total area. But the Crown estates in Wales had been diminished not only by sales made by the Crown authority, but by grants made by Sovereigns of England of their own motion. These had diminished what the Welsh people believed to be their own patrimony. Again, for many generations, even down to the memory of living men, there was land-grabbing in the true sense of the term. According to local tradition, and the admissions made by one witness called by authority before the Commission, there had been actual taking possession of land by persons who ought, above all others, to have been very careful indeed in defining their boundaries, and in their treatment of the estates of the Crown. There was very considerable agitation in regard to this matter at the commencement of last century, again in the twenties, and again in 1848 and 1849. These led to considerable disturbances and unrest in Wales, and the Chartist agitation culminated in a very serious civil commotion in Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire and in the agricultural parts of Wales. The Government appointed a Commission to investigate the cause of these riots, and the result was that special legislation was passed for the counties in South Wales. But throughout the whole of Wales there continued to be the greatest feeling of distrust on the part of the people, who were just rising to an appreciation of their rights, and could make their voice heard. *The Times* newspaper thought it worth while to send round a special commissioner to examine into the state of things in the Welsh counties, the condition of which was very imperfectly known to the then Press of England. *The Times* newspaper itself was moved to speak on the subject in consequence of an agitation in reference to an estate which had been very prominent lately in the deliberations of the House of Commons. In a leading article that newspaper in 1849 said—

> "Public attention has of late been somewhat attracted to the administration of Crown Lands by the Board of Woods and Forests, but we do not remember much discussion as to the proceedings of that body in connection with a property situated in North Wales. We have received communications—"

This appeared to him to be important—

> "from persons well acquainted with the locality, complaining of the grievous malversation on the part of those who should have acted as guardians of the public interest."

The Crown property in North Wales was described as most valuable, and then followed a very good enumeration of the mineral rights and other resources of the Crown in Wales. *The Times* also said that Crown property in Wales had been looked upon as a legitimate source of political corruption; that Crown property of enormous value in North Wales had been appropriated by private owners with the privity and connivance of Crown agents; that the documents in Cardiganshire had been made away with; and that all was at present obscurity. *The Times* added that it was time that state of things was brought to a termination. One could not, of course, expect consistency on the part of a now very aged and respected newspaper any more than in the case of an ordinary politician. For aught he knew *The Times* might now repent of the strong language of its comparative youth; but he could give more than one case, on absolutely proved testimony, which would verify all the language in the article from which he had quoted. From the very necessities of the case he was compelled to go back to what might be called ancient history. He would not like, on mere suspicion, to cite modern instances. All they asked for was that a Commission should be appointed to clear away suspicion from landowners in Wales. He would give one case. Mr. Thomas Johns was a Welshman who had rendered very great service with regard to literature. He was for forty years a Member of this House, was Lord-Lieutenant of Cardiganshire, and steward of the Crown manors. When Mr. Johns died a part of the estate came up for sale. It was put up to auction, and doubt being raised as to the title to 7,000 acres, it was found that this distinguished person had enclosed that extent of Crown land. There might be an excuse for some of the landowners who had enclosed Crown lands in the same way, because there was a theory that they had certain rights to sheep-walks, and that the law of England did not apply to Crown lands. There was nothing in that legal pretension, and it was discarded long ago. The case he mentioned was never challenged before the Commission. The Commissioners went over the country, and they found that it was perfectly easy for a man to put up a stone wall and a notice that trespassers would be prosecuted, especially as the Woods and Forest Department had no proper survey or maps. The Commission demanded that a proper survey should be made; it was made in the Middle Ages, why should it not be made now? Then, as regarded the sales which had taken place, there were a series of very remarkable transactions connected with them. It might be said that the present Commissioner had nothing to do with that. He quite admitted that; and he was glad to know that during the last few years only small sales had been carried out by the Commissioner of Woods and Forests. He should, however, like to mention one case that came before the Commission—a case which the Commission could not understand. In 1857, 23,000 acres of land were sold to Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn by the Commissioner of Woods and Forests. The Commission did not know whether the price was too high or too low; but he would assume that the price was fair. This land was, however, contiguous to a rising town in the most healthy part of Wales, to which people were beginning to flock. Why was this land sold to a man who was already such a large proprietor of land that he was called in jest "the King of Wales." [Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM, Glamorganshire, Rhondda: What was the price per acre?] He was very glad that question had been asked. The price was 5s. an acre, and the agent to Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn said that nothing astonished him so much as the enormously increased value of that apparently waste mountain of land. Of course it was all due to the increase of population, to the development of the mining industry and to other circumstances. What the Commission could not understand was why land in a progressing county, which was increasing in value year by year, should be sold at a price even less than its mere agricultural value. There were other points strictly relevant to the Motion which he could mention, but he thought he had made out a strong case. When a Royal Commission, constituted as the Commission on Land in Wales was constituted, submitted an unanimous recommendation, the burden of proof was shifted from them on to the Government. He should like to know why the recommendation of that Commission had not been carried out. In conclusion he was glad to know that with regard to the matter of sales, a change for the better had taken place, and he would merely content himself with moving his Motion.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said that in seconding the Motion, the exigencies of time would only permit him to say a few words. He only wished that his hon. friend who had served with such distinction on the Royal Commission had a longer time at his disposal in which to develop the very interesting arguments he brought before the House. He joined with his hon. friend in paying a tribute to the present Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and he would add that in bringing forward the Motion there was nothing further from their thoughts than to reflect in the slightest degree on the Commissioner of Woods and Forests or the *personnel* of his office. His hon. friend had referred to some extraordinary transactions which had taken place with regard to Crown lands in Wales. If it had been possible to detail to the House some of those transactions, hon. Members would be surprised at the extent to which political jobbery and corruption were carried on during the first half of the last century. It might be said that those transactions were things of a far distant past; and that they could not now interfere with grants duly made by the Crown. But not only were grants made, but there were enormous encroachments on every side; and the Commission had ample evidence before it of cases of that kind to justify it in passing an unanimous recommendation on the subject. He would venture to ask the Government at all events to give the matter their very careful consideration, and to see whether it would not be proper to carry out the recommendation of the Commission. There was one reason not mentioned in the Report of the Commission why an inquiry ought to be made. At the present time, when a local authority wished to obtain land, especially foreshore, they were utterly unable to find out who the Governmental owners were. What evidence would be at the disposal of the Commission suggested by his hon. friend? There was no other part of the United Kingdom in which the evidence with regard to the position of Crown manors was so clear and explicit as in North Wales. There was a vast amount of valuable evidence in existence which could be placed at the disposal of the Commission in that respect. There was another very important point with regard to the leases of foreshores made from time to time by the Office of Woods and Forests. They had obtained a promise to the effect that such leases would not be made in future without due notice to the local authority. He knew one or two cases in which that notice had not been given, with the result that considerable inconvenience was caused to the local authority; and he should like an assurance from the hon. Gentleman on that point. With regard to the last part of the Motion he had now only time to say that it was part of a very great problem; and that the Office of Woods and Forests had a peculiar opportunity for taking in hand the question of the afforestation of waste lands. He trusted that, although the Government might not be able fully to enter into the question to-night, they would consider the matter in the direction indicated by the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House regrets that the Government have not taken steps to carry out the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, that a Commission, the members of which should have the powers of Judges of the High Court of Justice, should be appointed to survey the Crown Lands in Wales and Monmouthshire, and to make an extent of the rents, dues, etc., payable from such Crown Lands, and is of opinion that sales of such Crown Lands should cease except where necessary in the public interest, and that they should be afforested wherever desirable and practicable."—(*Mr. Brynmor Jones.*)

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT, Durham) said both sides of the House would agree that the Motion was in no way an attack on the present Commissioner of Woods and Forests; and he did the hon. Gentleman who introduced it the full justice of saying that he reviewed and criticised a system, not persons. In the few minutes that remained he should like to call attention to the very deep fallacy which, to his mind, ran under the whole of the drift of the remarks of the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Motion. The hon. Gentleman seemed to regard Crown lands in Wales as being peculiarly the property of the Welsh people, as distinguished from the rest of the population of the United Kingdom. Would the hon. Member contend that the Welsh, Scotch, and Irish people had no concern in the Crown land rights in London, acquired in exchange for definite relief from taxation? He hardly thought that the hon. Gentleman would be able to substantiate that view, which was entirely opposed to the interests of the common citizen of this country. The hon. Gentleman's speech resembled the Report of the Royal Commission in one respect. The Report was one of the longest that had ever come under his notice; and it went through a period from the time of the Black Prince downwards. The hon. Member, actuated by a similar antiquarian spirit, in his speech resembled that Report. He confined himself to the beginning and middle of the last century, and quoted *The Times* in the earlier half of the century to show that Crown lands in Wales were made the subject of political corruption. But the hon. Gentleman did not bring forward a single particle of evidence to show that Crown lands at the present time were liable to abuse.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES said that he could not refer to the present position merely on suspicion.

*MR. ELLIOT said that the hon. Gentleman having asked the Government to institute a great Commission which would have the power, as a matter of right, to examine titles, should show some case for it. He had shown no case for such a Commission. If time permitted he would like to say more on the subject, because one of the charges was that the Crown was recklessly parting with land which was looked upon nowadays as the property of the public. He had a table showing that during the last half-dozen years the sales of Crown lands had been almost *nil.* Some 200 or 300 acres had been sold, and in that a recommendation of Sir Henry Fowler's Committee had been followed; but large tracts had been bought which they hoped to use in the future for the benefit of the property which they admimistered.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS.)

Address for "Return showing the estimated position, as regards capital expenditure, of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1903, and the proposed expenditure thereon during 1903–4."—(*Mr. Price.*)

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 30th April, 1903.

COMMISSION.

The following Bill received the Royal Assent—Army (Annual).

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.]. Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Pentillie Estate Bill [H.L.]. Judges' Report received. Bill presented and read 1ª.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Petition for additional provision; of the British Electric Traction Company under their Common Seal; together with the proposed Amendments annexed thereto; read and referred to the Examiners.

Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill: Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 12th and 26th March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with an Amendment.

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill. Read 2ª and committed.

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill. Read 2ª, and committed for Tuesday next.

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Standing Order No. 92, considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a petition of Messrs. Greenall, Whitney, and Company, leave given to present the said petition.

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill, (No. 40); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, (No. 41); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, (No. 42); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3.) Bill, (No. 43). Read 1ª, to be printed; and referred to the examiners.

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; City and South London Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Bournemouth Corporation Tramways and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.], Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [H.L.], Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.], Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.—

E. Abingdon,
L. Barnard,
L. De Mauley,
L. Aberdare,
L. Glanusk (Chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL. [H.L.]

Petition against; of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Petition for abrogation of; of Catholics residing in Ford, Liverpool; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (WATER-TUBE BOILERS).

Report on further trials of H.M.S. "Hyacinth" and H.M.S. "Minerva" (with diagrams).

TURKEY No. 3 (1903).

Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2964. Spain (Bilbao).
No. 2965. Netherlands (Amsterdam).
No. 2966. France (French Indo-hina).

AGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS NGLAND AND WALES).

Abstract for 1902.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising—

I. The construction of—

Light railways from Leighton Buzzard to Hitchin, in the counties of Bedford and Hertford.

Light railways in the urban district of Barking Town, in the county of Essex.

Light railways from Morriston to Pontardawe, in the county of Glamorgan; extensions of light railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Deviation, etc.) Order, 1902.

A light railway in the county of Wilts, forming an additional junction between the Basingstoke and Salisbury Railway of the London and South Western Railway Company, near Porton, and the light railway authorised by the Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway Order, 1898.

II. The extensions of light railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Deviation, etc.), Order, 1902.

III. Amending the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Order, 1900.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on Table.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ACCOUNTS).

Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police, and Police Pension Fund, between the 1st April, 1902, and the 31st March, 1903.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (PARTICULARS OF PIECE-WORK WAGES: FELT HATS).

Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 22nd April, 1903, applying with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, to the making of felt hats, and repealing the existing Order of the 30th November, 1897.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Accounts showing receipts and expenditure on accounts of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-Up) Act, 1890, during the year ended 31st March, 1903.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Account showing the receipts and expenditure on account of bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (ESTIMATES).

Return showing the items of expenditure in 1903–1904, amounting to £34,245,000, in excess of those of 1893–94 amounting to £17,631,300. Laid before the House (pursuant to Address of the 30th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 38.)

MANCHURIA.

*EARL SPENCER: Seeing the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is in his place, I should like to ask him whether the report which has appeared in the newspapers to-day is true as to negotiations between Russia and China. If he can give the House any information I am sure it will afford your Lordships very great satisfaction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, at the last sitting of your Lordships' House I mentioned to the noble Lord that communications were passing between His Majesty's Government and the other Governments concerned with regard to the conditions which the Russian Government was alleged to be demanding in connection with the evacuation of Manchuria.† Those communications are still in progress; but in the meanwhile we have received from sources the authority of which we cannot question, information to the effect that the Russian Government has made an intimation that they disclaim all intention of seeking for exclusive privileges in Manchuria or departing from the assurances given in regard to that province.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the Day for the House going into Committee read.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (LORD BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): My Lords, I do not propose to ask the House to take this stage of the Bill to-day, but I did not take the Bill off the Notice Paper because I desired to make a very short statement to the House as to the course which I propose to pursue in regard to it. Some petitions have been presented against it, notably by the noble Lord, Lord Robertson, who is in the House, and one by Lord Shand, and various objections have been laid before me at the Scottish Office by the legal societies. As I explained to the House on a former occasion, the Bill is of a highly technical character, and the arguments on the one side and the other with regard to some of the clauses, require most careful consideration, and, indeed, an amount of technical knowledge which I myself do not possess, and which I fancy few of your Lordships would lay claim to. I see my way, I hope, to meet a good many of the objections urged to the Bill as it now stands. Some, I am afraid, it is not possible to meet. They must be argued out and Parliament must decide. The course I propose to pursue, and which I think will be for the convenience of the House, is this. I propose to postpone the Committee stage till Tuesday and then to pass the Bill through that stage *pro forma*, inserting a number of Amendments which, I hope, will make the Bill agreeable to some, at any rate, of those who at present have stated objections to it. After that I propose to recommit the Bill, either to a Committee of the whole House or to a Select Committee, or to take it in any other way that may be most convenient to the noble Lords, allowing ample time to elapse for the legal societies in Scotland to consider it in its altered form. I have no desire to take anybody by surprise in regard to the Bill, or to rush it through. I believe it contains some clauses which are very distinctly in the public interest, and I should be sorry if it failed to pass altogether; but I recognise that it touches a very important part of the Land Register system of Scotland. This is a matter which the legal profession take a very great interest in and have a right to watch very carefully, and therefore, though I think there are some reforms eminently desirable, I do not, as I have said, desire to take anybody by surprise, and if the course I suggest is agreed to I will undertake between the stages to give ample time both to the House, and to those in Scotland interested in the matter, for the consideration of the Bill in its altered form.

---

† See page 639.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I am glad to hear the statement which has just fallen from my hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland, because it was my intention, if he had not made the proposal he has now made, to offer the suggestion that for the purpose of considering this Bill it would be more satisfactory that it should be referred to a Select Committee of your Lordships' House. We have many Scottish noble Lords in this House, expert in the law, and others who would be able to give a thorough consideration to the Bill and who would, I think, be able to amend it so as to make it a useful measure for us in Scotland. I think at first we were under a little misapprehension with regard to the scope of the Bill—I mean before it was printed. The noble Lord when he introduced the Bill—the only occasion on which he has made a speech on it—produced to us a most interesting volume consisting of the photographic copies of various deeds. I confess I was very much taken with the appearance of the volume, and I think the general idea was that the whole purpose of this Bill was to replace the system of copying deeds in the office by a system of photography. But when we come to examine the Bill we find that it proposes nothing short of a complete revolution of the system of land registry as it exists, and as it has existed in Scotland for 300 years.

May I venture, in a few words, to describe the process of registering a deed in Scotland at this moment? A deed relating to heritable property is presented at the Register House and entered in a book by the presenter, wherein is stated his name, the name of the parties, the day and hour of presentment, and the county to which the deed applies. It is left at the Register House and thereafter engrossed by handwriting in a bound volume which is issued by the Deputy Clerk Registrar, who has charge of the Records and is responsible for their proper and safe keeping. The volumes are issued by the Deputy Clerk Registrar, bound up to prevent any tampering with the Records either by leaving out sheets, or introducing sheets, or otherwise manipulating the Records. A short abstract is thereupon prepared, giving the names of the parties, a short description of the property, the nature of the deed, and the date thereof. This abstract, which is termed an abridgment, is thereafter printed, and a copy is sent to the Sheriff Clerk of each county in Scotland, for reference, or to be consulted by any party desiring to do so. The deed is thereafter returned to the presenter thereof, or the agent who has charge of the matter. An index is then prepared stating the name of the parties to the deed, which is kept in alphabetical order, and a similar index giving the places of the property in like alphabetical order is also prepared. These indices are written in the Register House, and by statute are open to the inspection of the public on payment of a small fee for the purpose of enabling either the abridgments or the proper Record to be examined. That system has worked well. Now, my Lords, the effect of this Bill is to do away with these indices and abridgments altogether. I maintain that for the purposes of the public in Scotland these indices and abridgments are the most important part of our whole Record Office. I do not think the ordinary public want to go into the details of all the various deeds. What they want to find out is, whether a particular property has been dealt with in any particular manner, or whether there is a charge on any property or deed. That they find out by consulting these indices and abridgments, and if you abolish these conveniences to the public in the Land Registry Office you really destroy a great deal of the utility of that Office. I do not think we in the least understood that that was going to be the effect of the Bill; and the inclusion of such a provision is all the more extraordinary from the fact that Lord Low's Committee (paragraphs 164 and 181) strongly recommended the retention of the indices and abridgments in any future arrangement. I will not go into any of the other details of the Bill. I think it is open to doubt whether, after all, these photographic reproductions of deeds are likely to be so necessary as may appear. I think a certified copy of a deed in a particular place, for reference by parties interested, amply meets the case, and I do not think it is desirable that we should have a perfect shower of facsimile copies of deeds scattered over the whole of Scotland. I would like to remind my noble friend that the Court of Session has not had any opportunity of fully considering the Bill. The Committee of the Society of Solicitors in the Supreme Court prepared a report on the Bill, and on April 9th a special general meeting of the Society approved that report. In that report they strongly recommend that the Bill should be opposed, and that, in any event, the section as regards repeal of the Land Registry Act must be omitted. I have received a number of letters on the subject of this Bill, in which it is stated that no demand has been made either by the public or the legal profession for the measure; that Scotland has enjoyed, in consequence of the present admirable system of registration, remarkable immunity from forgery and fraud, and that to circulate facsimiles of deeds and the signatures would be practically offering a strong inducement to fraud, besides distributing needlessly information regarding the rights of landlords to their property. I am quite sure there is a great improvement possible in the present system, and that we are all anxious to secure that improvement, and I hope my noble friend will see his way, when he comes to deal further with this Bill, to refer it to such a Select Committee of this House as I have ventured to indicate, rather than attempt to discuss it in Committee of the whole House.

Committee of the whole House put off to Tuesday next.

NAVAL FORCES BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (The Earl of Selborne): My Lords, this Bill is not a large Bill, and yet it is a distinctly important one from the point of view of naval efficiency. Its object is to increase the facilities of the Admiralty for the enlargement of naval reserves, and it is based on the recommendations of the very able Committee on Naval Reserves, which was presided over by Sir Edward Grey, and the Report of which has been laid before both Houses of Parliament. The object of the Bill is, in the first place, to enable the Admiralty to establish forces of Naval and Marine Volunteers. I have been asked to what purpose in a war a Naval Volunteer could be put. I can only reply that the Admiralty would use him according to the interests of the State at the moment. There can be no pledge that the Volunteer will be used either on land or on sea specially. He would probably be used on land in connection with the ports and the coastguard and signal stations, but he would also, I think, be used at sea, and if once used at sea a Naval Volunteer must understand—and those who are interested in the creation of this force thoroughly understand—that he must be prepared not to limit his service either in scope or kind. He must be prepared to come under the Naval Discipline Act, and to do any work on board ship to which the captain of that ship may put him, and he must also be prepared to serve wherever the Admiralty may send the ship in which he is entered. So far as possible, the Admiralty are quite prepared to undertake to employ such Volunteers in the fleets and squadrons nearer home, but there is no obligation on them not to employ them elsewhere, and, of course, if in time of war a ship in which Naval Volunteers are borne is ordered from home waters to more distant waters, they must be thoroughly prepared to go with their ship. It is quite obvious that there are special ratings in which a Naval Volunteer may be of particular use. I refer to such ratings as the electrician ratings, mechanic or artisan ratings, and signal ratings, if he has taken every opportunity in time of peace to perfect himself according to the opportunities given him, and those are extra and special to the more ordinary seamen ratings with which your Lordships are all familiar. The great distinction between this force and the old Naval Artillery Volunteers lies in the fact to which I have drawn your Lordships' attention, that such Volunteers must be prepared to serve wherever the Admiralty send them, and not only in coastal waters.

The second object of this Bill is to extend the powers of the Admiralty in respect of non-continuous service men. Your Lordships will remember that about fifty years ago a great revolution took place in the manning of the Navy. Up to that time every man serving in the Navy was a non-continuous service man; that is, he entered for a limited period, generally for one commission, at the end of which time he reverted to civil life. The continuous service system changed all that, and offered to the seamen a profession for life. It offered him an engagement, first of all for ten years from the age of eighteen, and now for twelve years from the age of eighteen, at the expiration of which period he was offered a pension if he extended his service to twenty-one years. That is the continuous service system, and the great bulk of the men are now serving under that system; but the non-continuous service men, although constantly diminishing in numbers, have never disappeared; there are several thousand of them at present in the Fleet, more especially in connection with the ratings that are not seamen ratings, and at the present time the non-continuous service man and the continuous service man are serving side by side. The object of this Bill is to enable the Admiralty to make a bargain with the non-continuous service man and say to him: "Will you join the Navy to serve in the Fleet for three or four years and then pass into the Fleet Reserve for the unexpired portion of twelve years from the date of your enlistment?" This is in order that we may build up in a more rapid manner the Royal Fleet Reserve, which, unlike the Royal Naval Reserve, is composed entirely of men who have served in the Fleet. This is to enable the Royal Fleet Reserve to be increased more quickly, especially in the stoker ratings, where there is, and otherwise will be in the future, serious deficiency, and by entering these men for non-continuous service in the Fleet, and then for six, seven, or eight years in the Reserve, as the case may be, in a few years time we hope to build up a really large Fleet Reserve. It is also proposed to extend the system to the seamen ratings as well as to the stoker ratings, but it is with the special object of increasing the stoker ratings that this proposal is made. At the same time we ask Parliament to abolish those limits to both the Fleet and the Naval Reserve now imposed by Act of Parliament. There is no object in having such limits imposed because, of course, it rests in the discretion of Parliament every year to limit the Reserve by limiting the money it chooses to vote for their pay. Therefore in no sense is the control of Parliament decreased, but an arbitrary, and, it seems to me, quite unnecessary, limitation of the Reserves will be removed. I ask your Lordships to read this Bill a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Selborne.*)

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, though this Bill is not a long one, I think it is a measure of no small importance to the future of the Navy. If I recollect correctly, it was in the early days when I was at the Admiralty that the final dissolution of the Naval Volunteer force took place.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I think it was in Lord George Hamilton's time.

*EARL SPENCER: I remember very well that the Board over which I had the honour to preside had to consider this question, and we came to the conclusion that it was not desirable to renew at that time this Volunteer force for the Navy. The noble Earl the present First Lord thinks it would be wise, and he is supported by the recommendation of a very important Committee, that we should once more have recourse to Volunteers for seamen and Marines. I sincerely trust that this will turn out well, and that past difficulties will not recur. The noble Earl referred to the special ratings under which Volunteers might enter and be of great service. I need hardly point out that these special ratings have increased in number and become very much more important since the old Volunteers existed, and therefore I think there is every reason to hope that in this respect Naval Volunteers will be of great use; but I hardly expect that a large body of Volunteers will ever be found to be of great service in manning ships in time of war. That they would be of service on the coast is likely to be true, and I sincerely hope the experiment will be successful. I attach great importance to securing a proper Reserve for naval service. Even if the efforts to secure large numbers of seamen and stokers have been successful, we have not now the resource the mercantile marine provided in old days. The pages of the report of the Committee over which Sir Edward Grey so ably presided show how circumstances have completely changed and how, while the number of British seamen in the mercantile marine has diminished, the demands of the Navy have increased. The proposal to increase the number of non-continuous service men will add enormously to the number of the Reserve, and I welcome the Bill in the belief that it will be of service to the Navy in the future. It has been said that this Bill removes from the House of Commons the power of regulating the number of men employed in the naval forces, But the real fact is that, though the Admiralty may name the number of men to be employed in these different forces, Parliament must have the ratification of the numbers and can always refuse to vote the money for them. I therefore rejoice that part of the Bill removes the limitation of 30,000 and 15,000 to the two great Reserves that now exist for the Navy. There is another point which has been discussed in another place. I would be glad if the regulations which have to be drawn out with regard to these new forces were, when made or shortly afterwards, to be laid before Parliament. The Admiralty in another place have refused to agree to a new clause dealing with this matter. Possibly the proposal made is not quite consistent with some of the old regulations, but at the same time I think Parliament has a right to expect that all the regulations should be made known to it. I heartily support the Second Reading of the Bill.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

REGULATION OF MOTOR CARS.

Lord **LAMINGTON**: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government for a return of cases reported to the police since 1st January, 1902, in which injury was caused to the person or property of the public by motor cars, otherwise than those accidents in which occupants of the cars were alone injured. I am not bringing this forward in any hostility to motor cars; on the contrary I believe the day will come when special roads will be constructed by those who use motor-cars so that they can run at high rates of speed. But in the meantime motor-cars, except in a very few instances, are not practicable machines. For the most part they are not employed for commercial purposes, and their use is merely a branch of sport indulged in on the public roads at considerable risk to the public, and certainly at great detriment to the public convenience and comfort. When our public roads were built there was no anticipation that they would be used for traffic of this sort, and the number of accidents that have occurred is decidedly large. Numerical comparisons simply between accidents from carriages drawn by horses and from motor-cars are misleading, because the number of carriages drawn by horses is very much greater than the number of motor-cars. I think that if it were possible to arrive at a proper return, it would be found that motor-cars are a source of danger out of proportion to any other form of traffic. I know a parish which used to be very quiet where the people now live in a state of terrorism during the summer months. People living in the suburbs of London do not dare to drive about as they used to do. I admit that if I had a motor-car I would use it to go at the fastest speed I could get out of it, and I am sure all noble Lords would do the same. [A Noble Lord: "I do not."] What needs to be legislated against is a tendency of human nature which is hurtful to the public; temptation ought to be taken out of people's way. I think one reason why people drive their motor-cars at full speed is that it is injurious to the machinery to run them at any lesser speed. In the case of railways we have imposed stringent regulations in the interests of railway servants and the public. The owners of motor-cars, unlike the railway companies, contribute nothing to the roads which they use except the share which falls to an ordinary ratepayer and taxpayer, and they use these roads to the risk and the detriment of the public. I understand that the Local Government Board are at the present moment occupied in framing regulations. I do not see the representative of the Local Government Board in his place, but I would suggest, in the first place, that we should insist that all motor cars should be numbered and perhaps painted according to their rates of speed; and, in the second place, that all drivers should hold certificates, and, like engine drivers—I understand that the driving of an ordinary railway engine is simplicity itself compared to the intricacies of a motor car — be required to pass a stringent examination. There ought also to be regulation of pace, but that is a matter of detail which I need not go into now. I trust that the noble Lord who represents the Home Office will be able to give the Return for which I ask. I know that even in the most favourable circumstances it is bound to be an imperfect Return as many accidents which occur are not reported to the police, but I think some Return ought to be presented.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: I am sure everyone in this House will agree with the noble Lord that some regulations should be put in force to stop reckless driving, but I think it is erroneous to imagine that this can be done by imposing a maximum speed, because to drive at even a slow speed through a crowded district is a source of danger. There are some level open roads of which the motorist can command a view for miles ahead and where he may safely go at a high speed, and I contend that it is perfectly ridiculous to impose a fine in such a case, when there is not the slightest risk of injury to anybody. There are other roads, of course, where the greatest caution is needed. What is required is not so much a limit of speed as regulations which would oblige people to drive carefully. Persons who are guilty of repeated offences ought to be severely fined. With regard to the Return which is asked for, I should like to inquire who is to decide when an accident is the fault of the driver of the motor-car and when it is due to other people. Such a Return would be an invitation to the police in certain counties to manufacture cases. I hope the Department will lose no time in drawing up reasonable and proper regulations.

Lord BELPER: I regret I cannot go into the main part of the speech of the noble Lord, because it is practically a point which is dealt with by the Local Government Board. I may have my own views with regard to the present regulations. As a private individual, I think it would be very difficult to defend them as they stand. But, in answer to the request of the noble Lord for a Return, I would point out that there is no obligation at present to report these accidents to the police. No doubt a good number of these accidents do come within the knowledge of the police, especially in the big towns; but to secure a Return of the kind asked for, the Home Office would have to apply to every police authority in the kingdom, which would entail much expense and trouble, without, as the Home Office think, any corresponding advantage. For such a Return would not in the circumstances really represent the number of accidents which had taken place. I am informed that in the Metropolitan Police District, there were forty persons reported to be injured by light locomotives in the year 1902, but it is impossible to say how many more cases there may have been which were not reported. I may also say that no person within the Metropolitan area was killed by a light locomotive in 1902.

Lord LAMINGTON did not press for a Return.

THE PROPOSED ARMY GUILD SERVICE.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH had the following notice on the Paper: "To ask the Lord Bishop of London whether his attention has been called to a service proposed to be celebrated at St. Paul's Cathedral on 6th May 'In commemoration of those members of the Guild of the Holy Standard and St. Helena and all soldiers who died in the war in South Africa'; whether the right rev. Prelate holds himself responsible for special services in St. Paul's Cathedral; whether he has had submitted to him any such service; whether it has received his sanction; and what deviations, alterations, or additions he has sanctioned to the Office of Holy Communion on such occasion."

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I think I ought to explain that on arriving in London yesterday evening I wrote to the Bishop of London telling him that, as I had been informed that this proposed service had been definitely abandoned, I did not intend to put him to the inconvenience of leaving his diocesan conference and coming down to the House this afternoon. However, a letter from the right rev. Prelate crossed my letter, and I am sure it would only be justice to the right rev. Prelate to read an extract from it to the House. The Bishop writes—

> "The service, as you probably know, has fallen through. The service to which you allude was not submitted to me, but no doubt would have been on my return from abroad. It was, however, withdrawn before the necessity arose."

I thought it was only fair to the right rev. Prelate to state those facts and to explain his absence, and to make it quite clear that the right rev. Prelate, while as visitor accepting responsibility for any special services, was not in any way responsible for this proposed service at St. Paul's. A great deal of nonsense has been written in the papers on the question of prayers for the dead. Speaking for myself, I cannot see that there can be any objection, either from the Church of England point of view or from the Christian point of view, to private prayers for the dead. We pray for those we have with us here, and there can be no reason why we should not pray for those in another world. But what was felt by a very large number of persons to be the really serious point in this matter was that it was not a question of private prayers for the dead, but a question of a public service which implied a very serious alteration in and addition to the Office of Holy Communion. There is naturally a very strong feeling that the service of Holy Communion should not be altered in any way. The moment you do that, very grave questions of principle are at once raised. It was felt, as I think wisely, by a very large number of persons that, if any such service were celebrated in St. Paul's Cathedral which met with the serious suspicion of a large portion of the community, which also was condemned by several members of the Chapter itself, and which would have been taken by a certain section, and openly explained to be a requiem mass, great offence would have been given. Further, what would have been much more serious in regard to the discipline of the Church of England, the service would have been taken as a precedent and largely amplified in a number of other churches not themselves in so responsible and important a position as St. Paul's. I am very grateful to know that no such service is to take place. Although it is quite clear that the Bishop of London must be exonerated from any responsibility for the proposed service, I very much regret that it should be in the power of certain members of the Chapter of St. Paul's to start services of this kind without full and complete consideration and without consulting the best and highest authority. In that view I am only reiterating the sentiments of the late Archbishop Benson. After the Lincoln judgment had been pronounced, that distinguished man wrote of a visit to St. Paul's—

> "Alas! those minor canons, who are allowed their own way in everything, have introduced ablution since the Lincoln Judgment, and have turned the order on openness in consecration into a new bit of ritualism, lifting the cup high and breaking the bread and drawing the arms apart with the two pieces of broken bread. Thus, what was meant to give plainness is by these perverse folk turned to a far more ceremonious mode. Full tilt we go to alienate all the laity we can. If they were not so much wiser than the clergy, they would be all gone to Dissent before this."

In the circumstances I shall not put my question.

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILL IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 39.)

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for re-arranging the boundaries of the dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester, and Bath and Wells—was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 44.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 30*th April*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to:

1. Army (Annual) Act, 1903.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

Romford and District Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred pursuant to the Order of the House of the 6th day of April, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Post Office Sites Bill.

Western Trust Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Dover Corporation Bill (by Order). Read a second time and committed.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, "to extend the time limited by The Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Act, 1900, for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of certain of the railways authorised by that Act; and for other purposes." Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5), Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Castleblaney (Urban), Castleblaney (Rural), the Port of Cork, and the Portadown and Banbridge Joint Waterworks District. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5), Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Metropolitan Boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn, and Lambeth. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6), Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Coventry, Rawmarsh, Shipley, and Tynemouth. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway. Ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5), Bill "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Castleblaney (Urban), Castleblaney (Rural), the Port of Cork, and the Portadown and Banbridge Joint Waterworks District." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 169.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5), Bill "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Metropolitan Boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn, and Lambeth." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 170.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill, "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Coventry, Rawmarsh, Shipley, and Tynemouth." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 171.]

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway," presented; and ordered to be considered upon Monday next.

City and North East Suburban Electric Railway Bill, reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 3).

Mr. COMPTON RICKETT reported from the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

Two Petitions from Brighton, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Greasbrough; Poynton; Dysart; Snydale (No 2); Bank Hall; Burnley; Wallsend Main; Dearne Valley; Barnsley Main; Stanhope Silkstone; Burnley; Frystone (No. 2); Haigh; Crigglestone Coal Company; Stourton Grange, Leeds; Lea Green; Tong; Netherton; Denby Grange; Houghton Main; Waverley; Orgreave; Grange; Newmarket Silkstone; Wakefield; Bowers (No. 2); Lofthouse; Bowers (No. 3); Newland; Frystone (No. 1); Leeds Central; Nostell; Carlton Main; Newmarket High Moor; Marchay; Tollcross; Southgate; Marlpool; Grassmoor (No. 3); Clay Cross; Ryhill Main; South Hindley; and Halton Colleries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Burnley; Heath; and Aberavon; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Yell, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petitions against; from Battersea; Southampton; and Upton Park; to lie upon the Table

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration; from Spynie; and Alyth, to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from North Berwick, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

Petitions against: from Walthamstow; Oxford; Liverpool; and Brighton (two); to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Leith; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Coventry, against; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Southgate; Greasbrough; Poynton; Dysart; Bank Hall, Burnley; Barnsley Main; Wallsend Main; Stanhope Silkstone; Dearne Valley; Burnley; Frystone (No. 2); Lea Green; Newmarket High Moor; Newland; Bowers (No. 3); Stourton Grange, Leeds; Lofthouse; Leeds Central; Frystone (No. 1); Nostell; Methley; Snydale (No. 2); Haigh; Crigglestone Coal Company; Netherton; Denby Grange; Houghton Main; Waverley; Orgreave; Grange; Newmarket Silkstone; Wakefield; Bowers (No. 2); Tollcross; Tong; Marlpool; Marchay; Grassmoor (No. 3); Clay Cross; South Heindley; Halton; and Ryhill Main Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (WATER TUBE BOILERS).

Copy presented of Report on further Trials of H.M.S. "Hyacinth" and H.M.S. "Minerva" (with diagrams) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 135.)

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 136.)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES) (FELT HATS).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 22nd April 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the making of Felt sat s and repealing the existing Order of He 30th November, 1897 [by Act]; to lie thon the Table.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th April; Mr. Price]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 137.)

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2964 to 2966 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Wilts, forming an additional junction between the Basingstoke and Salisbury Railway of the London and South Western Railway Company near Porton, and the Light Railway authorised by the Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway Order, 1898 (Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway (Newton Toney Curve) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Order, 1900 (Mid-Suffolk Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising extensions of Light Railways authorised by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways Order, 1899, and by the Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Deviation, &c.) Order, 1902 (Doncaster Corporation Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the counties of Bedford and Hertford from Leighton Buzzard to Hitchin (Leighton Buzzard and Hitchin Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban district of Barking Town, in the county of Essex (Barking Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways from Morriston to Pontardawe, in the county of Glamorgan (Glamorgan County Council (Morriston to Pontardawe) Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) (GUARANTEE FUND).

Return ordered, "of Payments to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account and other Exchequer Grants which form the constituent parts of the Guarantee Fund, under 54 and 55 Vic., c. 48, s. 5, and 61 and 62 Vic., c. 37, s. 58, as proposed to be amended by the Irish Land Bill, 1903.)"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.]

ARMY (COMMISSIONS).

Address for "Return as to number of Commissions granted during each of the years 1899 to 1902, inclusive."—(*Mr. Pirie.*)

VOLUNTEERS.

Address for "Return respecting the Volunteers, in the following form :—

	Officers.	Men.	Battalions
Number of Volunteer battalions			
Number of battalions qualified under new regulations for inclusion in Army Corps Scheme			
Number required by Scheme			
Number of efficients who have earned Capitation Grant, 1902			
Strength of Volunteers—			
1st day of January, 1903			
1902			
1901			
1900			
1899			
Shortage of Officers—			
1903			
1899			

(*Mr. Churchill.*)

MILITARY WORKS AND STORES.

Address for "Return respecting Military Works and Stores, in the following form:—

	Military Stores.	Artillery.	Fortifications.	Barracks.
Amount of money expended:—				
1899				
1900				
1901				
1902				
1903				

—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

ROYAL GARRISON REGIMENTS

Address for "Return showing the annual cost of the Royal Garrison Regiment now stationed at Malta; the number of cases of drunkenness, of Courts-martial, and of diseases treated in hospital which have occurred within the last twelve months; the number of women and children borne on the strength of the regiment; and a comparison of these figures with the respective figures in any particular Regular Battalion in the same garrison; the number of Royal Garrison Regiments sanctioned by Parliament; and the number as yet formed." —(*Mr. Churchill.*)

HOUSE OF LORDS (MANUSCRIPTS).

Ordered, that a message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series). —(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Accidents caused by Electric Trams.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (City of London): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the cases of a cyclist who was killed on Monday, on the road between Kew Bridge and Gunnersbury, and of a cyclist, on Saturday last, whilst riding between Hampton Court and Hampton, when a car of the London United Tramway Company knocked him down, causing him severe injury; and whether, in view of the introduction of electric tram cars on the public roads, he will consider the desirability of steps being taken for the protection of the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have made enquiries and find that, in the first of the two cases mentioned, the coroner's jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and that it does not appear that there was any negligence on the part of the driver of the electric tram car or any breach of the law as to speed. I understand that the case is being further considered by the Board of Trade. I cannot trace the second case mentioned. The police have received no information as to injury caused on Saturday, the 18th April, to a cyclist between Hampton Court and Hampton.

Death of Uncle of Ruling Chief of Panna—Cost of Inquiry.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what was the total cost to the Government of India and the Panna Principality respectively of the inquiry that was made from June, 1901, to January, 1902, into the charges arising out of the death of the uncle of the Ruling Chief of Panna.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have no information as to the cost of the inquiry into the charges referred to, but I understand that the Government of India sanctioned, for the defence of the Maharaja, an expenditure up to a maximum of Rs.30,000, for which the revenues of the Panna State were to be liable.

India—Government Advances to Native States.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the number of Native States indebted to the Government of India on account of advances, the total amount of that indebtedness, the average rate of interest, and the amount by which the debt is being reduced annually.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) On the 31st March, 1902, loans were outstanding to 201 Native States, amounting in all to Rs.4,10,45,506. The repayments during the last three years, for which full information is available, have been as follows, viz.: in 1899–1900, Rs.1,41,293; in 1900–1901, Rs 31,13,950; in 1901–1902, Rs.15,97,864. The rate of interest in all cases was 4 per cent. Since the 31st March, 1902, some additional loans have been granted, at various rates of interest, chiefly to States which have suffered through the late famine; but complete information as to these transactions has not yet reached me.

India—Acreage of Irrigated Lands.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that the proportion of land revenue from irrigated lands is estimated at £821,900, can he state approximately the acreage of these lands in each Presidency contributing to this revenue.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The amount referred to represents certain additional land revenue receipts which are credited under the head Irrigation in the accounts as being the result of irrigation from State canals. The area irrigated in each province by canals to which land revenue credits are made was as follows in 1901–2: United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, 2,157,565 acres; Punjab and North West Frontier Province, 2,923,884 acres; Madras, 2,981,672 acres; Bombay, 986,082 acres.

British Government and Rajahs of Panna.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the dates of the Treaties between the British Government and the Rajahs or Ruling Chiefs of Panna since the year 1803.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) Panna is one of the minor states of Bundelkhand, whose chiefs hold under Sanad from the British Government, and are bound by deeds of allegiance to the British Government. There are no Treaties between the British Government and the Rulers of Panna.

India—Grants for Irrigation Works—Unexpended Balances.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, seeing that a special grant of twenty-five lakhs of rupees was made in 1902-3 under irrigation for new minor works, can he explain why the sum of £60,000 remained unexpended at the end of the year.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) Owing to projects not being ready in time it was not found possible to expend in 1902-3 the whole of the special grant of Rs.25,00,000 for minor irrigation works, but the special grant of Rs. 25,00,000 has been repeated in the Budget for 1903-4, and will be available for expenditure during the current year, irrespective of the amount actually expended in 1902-3.

Naval Reserve Men Employed in Royal Dockyards.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state how many men employed in the Royal dockyards are on the mobilisation list.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) It is not considered desirable in the public interest to give the precise information for which the hon. Member asks. The Admiralty, however, are fully alive to the importance of keeping a careful check on the numbers and occupations of pensioners and Royal Fleet reserve men employed in the Royal dockyards. Steps are being taken to ensure that in the event of mobilisation for war, the number of men required for the service of the Fleet will be available, and that, at the same time, there will be no unforeseen dislocation of the work of the dockyards.

Damage to the "Princess Alexandra."

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will say whether the Irish Lights Commissioners' steam yacht "Princess Alexandra," which recently stranded on the Hellyhunter Rock, was at the time in charge of an officer holding a Board of Trade certificate; and, if so, of what grade, and what was his rank on board the vessel; what is the actual or estimated cost of repairing the damage sustained; whether the bell buoy and the automatic whistling buoy near the spot were in working order at the time; and whether it is intended to hold a Board of Trade inquiry as to the cause of the casualty.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the "Princess Alexandra" was not stranded on the Hellyhunter Rock, but while approaching some wreckage in the vicinity of that rock she was damaged by striking some obstacle. The vessel was at the time in charge of the chief officer, who holds a Board of Trade master's certificate for home trade. The cost of repair of the damage is estimated at £150. It is not intended that any formal inquiry should be held as to the cause of the casualty.

Public Health—Vital Statistics.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, if, in view of the uselessness to county medical officers of health of the vital statistics at present issued for registration counties and districts, he will consider if these statistics can in future be issued for the urban and rural sanitary districts instead of for areas which often overlap the administrative counties.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have been in communication with the Registrar-General on this subject, and I find that he considers himself bound to publish statistics for registration districts and sub-districts which, as contemplated by the Births and Deaths Registration Acts, correspond with poor law unions and divisions of such unions. It would be impracticable, therefore, to issue the statistics for the sanitary districts instead of for the existing areas. The Registrar General also informs me that, if it was proposed to treat these districts as statistical units in addition to the present areas, this arrangement would involve an enormous amount of extra labour, and a large increase in the staff of his office. At the same time I sympathise with the object which my right hon. friend has in view, and perhaps some modified proposals might be made on the subject. If this is done I will take care that any such proposals shall receive thorough consideration.

Suggested Increase of Consular Representation.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will consider the advisability of increasing the number of salaried consular officers representing the United Kingdom, so that the commercial community in this country may have at their command such information as will render them better able to compete with other nations.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The advisability of increasing the number of salaried consular officers will receive careful consideration.

Telegraph Conference—International Exchanges.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is intended to discuss the question of international exchanges between the members of the postal and telegraph staffs at the forthcoming International Telegraph Conference in London; and, if not, whether he will direct that this subject shall receive consideration during the proceedings.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The question to which the hon. Member refers is not within the scope of the forthcoming International Telegraph Conference.

Improved Position of Sorters in Charge of Travelling Post Offices.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether a decision has yet been arrived at regarding the improvement to be made in the position of sorters travelling in charge of travelling post offices, which was promised in reply to representations made by a deputation of sorters on 13th January, 1901; and, if so, whether he will now communicate the proposed improvement to the deputation.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The matter to which the hon. Member refers has involved numerous and prolonged inquiries, affecting as it does the whole of the travelling post offices throughout the United Kingdom. The inquiries are now, I am glad to say, practically completed, and I hope shortly to be able to announce my decision to the officers concerned.

Dublin Science and Art and Natural History Museums, etc.—Position of Employees.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury will grant to the men employed in the Science and Art and Natural History Museums and College of Science, etc., in Dublin the terms asked for in a memorial forwarded by the Department two years ago, which are similar to those already granted to the attendants of the London and Edinburgh Museums by their respective Boards, following on the changes that had taken place at that time, owing to each department being placed under local administration.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) The memorial has not been forwarded to the Treasury, and I understand that the Department of Agriculture are not at present in a position to make a recommendation in regard to it.

Civil Service—Writers' Pensions.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state in what manner, as regards pension only, the terms of engagement of those writers who were advertised for in the public Press by the Civil Service Commissioners on the 15th August, 1870, and registered by them on the 3rd, 6th, and 8th September of the same year, as referred to in Mr. Hanbury's answer of 28th May, 1897, differed from the terms of engagement of those writers who were advertised for and registered after the 19th August, 1871.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*) There was no difference between the terms of engagement of the two classes of copyists as regards pension. In both cases the regulations stated that no service, however much it may happen to be prolonged, will confer any claim to superannuation allowance.

Army Pensions—Case of John Stapleton.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been called to the case of John Stapleton, pensioned gunner, who served twenty-four and one-sixth years, including two years' service granted for the Indian Mutiny; and whether, seeing that the terms of this man's service entitled him to 4d. per day extra on attaining the age of sixty years, and that he is now seventy-six, he will arrange that this pension shall be paid to this man.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The hon. Member is evidently alluding to the deferred pensions, which were only granted to men who were not in receipt of ordinary pension. This man, being already in receipt of a pension of 1s. a day, has no claim whatever to this grant of 4d. a day.

Army Pensions—Case of Henry Duke, late of 81st Foot.

MR. JOYCE: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been called to the case of Henry Duke, late of the 81st Foot, who served in the Army for over twenty-one years, and who is receiving 11d. per day: and whether, seeing that this soldier is now over sixty-six years old, and in view of his circumstances, his case can be favourably considered.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As this man is in receipt of the maximum rate of pension to which he is entitled the regulations will not permit of the grant of any further pension, as he has had no war service, and was not invalided from the Army.

Somaliland Operations—Wireless Telegraphy.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that the Marconi instruments used in Somaliland for wireless telegraphy have been marine instruments, he will arrange, in order to secure effective communication, that instruments will be employed adapted for use over-land, and worked by experts acquainted with over-land conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The instruments used in Somaliland were of Admiralty pattern, which has been tried over-land as well as over-sea. The naval officers and men in charge were thorough experts in their use, and were successful in establishing communications in certain cases, in one case to the extent of thirty-two miles, in spite of very exceptional difficulties. The results, however, were not, in the opinion of the general officer commanding, sufficiently certain to justify the further carriage of the instruments, which had led to exceptional difficulties of supply and transport.

Rough Riders and Scouts—Height Regulations.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will consider the expediency of enrolling as rough riders and for scouting purposes men who are at present debarred from entering the Army on account of their being under the regulation height.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The advantage of enlisting men under the regulation height has not been lost sight of in the past, but at present no specials are being taken.

Pacific Cable—Interruption of Service.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the date upon which the Pacific cable was opened to public use; what is the total aggregate interval of time during which through communication between the United Kingdom and Australia by the Pacific cable has been suspended; and on how many occasions has the telegraph route been interrupted.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The Pacific Cable was opened for public use throughout its entire length on the 8th December last. The cable has never been interrupted, though certain interruptions have taken place in its connecting land lines in Canada. These interruptions occurred on five occasions, and have involved a suspension of communication for 147 hours.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South African War Trophies.

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any allocation has yet been made of guns and rifles captured during the war in South Africa; and whether the representations that have been made by the Government of New Zealand for a full share in the distribution of trophies have been considered.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): No allocation has as yet been made. The whole question is being carefully considered by a Committee, but the correspondence before the Committee is very large. Full regard is being given to the representations on the subject made by the Government of New Zealand.

Army Meat Contracts.

MR. BILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the terms for contracts for the delivery of frozen mutton to the troops in South Africa during this year only reached Australia and New Zealand at the end of January, while tenders had to be sent in on 3rd February; and whether the War Office will take care that in this and future years timely notice of the conditions of contract will be sent to those Colonies.

*MR. BRODRICK: The delay in issuing the notices referred to was due to local circumstances. Steps will be taken in future by which, it is to be hoped, tenders can be called for three months in advance. It must be pointed out that in the case in question British as well as Australian competitors were affected, and the pressure is regretted in the interests of both classes of contractors.

Artillery Firing.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the rate of fire of the 1885 field gun, the 1899 field gun, and the Ehrherdt quick-firing field gun respectively.

*MR. BRODRICK: As I explained to my hon. friend on Tuesday last,† it is not usual to give the figures, and no good purpose would be served by so doing. Such figures would, so far as I am aware, not be given in respect of any foreign Army.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would be ready to go into the question of the rate of fire, as between quick-firing guns and guns which are not quick firing, on the proper Vote in the Estimates.

*MR. BRODRICK: I should be ready to go into the question generally, especially if we were asking for money in the Votes for a new gun. But I certainly do not think there is any public advantage in our stating in this House precisely what is the rate of fire of the British field and horse artillery guns—a statement which no foreign country would think of making.

LIEUT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood): Are these figures withheld because they show such a discrepancy?

*MR. BRODRICK: Not at all.

Collision between the "Bulwark" and the "Formidable."

SIR WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the extent of the damage done to each vessel when H.M.S. "Bulwark" and "Formidable" collided during manœuvres in the Mediterranean.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.). On August 19 last, the "Bulwark" and "Formidable" came into momentary contact while preparing to carry out towing exercises. The damage done was small, the anchor bed and a portion of the torpedo net shelf of the "Bulwark" were slightly damaged, and were repaired during the ordinary refit of the ship in November. On the "Formidable" the hinges of the leadsman's platform were broken, the metal casting of the casemate port was damaged, and a small portion of the hinged torpedo net shelf round the casemate broken. On the ships being subsequently docked for general refit, it was found that three of the frames below the waterline were slightly dented, and as the ship was in dock the opportunity was taken to straighten them, though the sea-worthiness of the ship was in no way interfered with. The damage to both ships was of the slightest description, and the cost of repairs has been trifling. I am quite unable to account for the gross exaggerations of this incident which have recently appeared in the public press.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether it was not a fact that notices were posted in each of the ships prohibiting any account of the incident being sent home, and whether that might not account for the exaggerations to which the hon. Gentleman had referred.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had no information on that subject.

In reply to a further question by Sir W. Allan, Mr. Arnold-Forster said there was no armour plating in the part of the ship where the frames were bent.

Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will take steps to have a record kept of the sickness and mortality which takes place amongst the Central African natives during their indenture in the Transvaal mines.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I will ask Lord Milner to have such a record kept, so far as it may be possible to do so. I doubt if it will be possible in the form suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

---

† See page 650.

Alaskan Boundary Commission.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the nature of the objection taken by the Canadian Government to the selection of jurists made by the President of the United States to act on the Tribunal appointed for the adjustment of the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska; and what action, if any, has been taken.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Dominion Government took exception to the jurists selected by the United States on the ground that they did not come within the description of persons specified in Article I. of the Treaty. The Treaty was ratified before the official announcement of the names of the American representatives was received. The Canadian Government, while protesting against the selection, agreed to nominate two representatives, and asked His Majesty's Government to secure, if possible, the services of the Lord Chief Justice as the third representative. No other action has been taken.

Tientsin Railway Siding Award.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can lay upon the Table of the House the award of M. Detring in respect of the Tientsin Railway Siding dispute.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): We have heard by telegraph that the award of the Arbitrator has been given in favour of the railway on two points, and we must await the receipt by mail of the full text of the award, which will show whether a settlement has been arrived at on all the points in dispute. It is impossible to say whether the Papers will be laid until we have seen them, but I hope there will be no difficulty.

Russia and the Niu-chwang Revenues.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing that Russia has collected and retained the Imperial Maritime Custom Revenues at Niu-chwang since August, 1900, and in view of the fact that these form part of the security for Chinese loans, His Majesty's Government has made representations to the Russian Government in regard to the restoration of these moneys in the interests of British bondholders; and, if so, with what results.

*LORD CRANBORNE: We have been informed that the duties collected by the Imperial Maritime Customs at Niu-chwang are paid into the Russo-Chinese Bank to the credit of the Chinese Government, *minus* the monthly amount required for the support of the office. I understand that the Russian authorities claim to deduct from these funds the amount expended by them in the repair of the Shanhaikuan-Niu-chwang Railway, but further inquiries are being made as to whether such an arrangement would endanger the security of the bondholders.

Russia and China.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Russian Government has demanded the dismissal of a British doctor from the position of health and quarantine officer at the treaty port of Niu-chwang, and that he should be replaced by a Russian naval doctor; and, if so, whether His Majesty's Government will insist, either alone or in concert with Japan and the United States of America, upon the retention of the British doctor.

The following Questions also appeared on the Paper.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing that the Manchurian Convention provided for the evacuation of Manchuria and the restoration of the Treaty Port of Niu-chwang by Russia to China on or before the 8th April, His Majesty's Government, in view of the failure of Russia to observe these provisions, are making representations on the subject to the Chinese and Russian Governments, either alone or in concert with Japan and the United States of America, in order to secure the fulfilment of the assurances repeatedly given by Russia in regard to these questions.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the Russian Government are seeking to debar China from employing foreign mining experts other than Russian in Manchuria, Mongolia, and the Province of Chi-li, His Majesty's Government will, either alone or in concert with Japan and the United States of America, insist upon the maintenance of equality of opportunity for all nationalities.

*Lord CRANBORNE: All three Questions refer to the evacuation of Manchuria. Since they were placed upon the Paper, the hon. Gentleman will have learnt from an answer which I gave yesterday, that His Majesty's Government are not yet in a position to give definite information. We have, however, received from sources the authority of which does not admit of doubt, confirmation of the statement that the Russian Government have announced that they have no knowledge of the reported Convention, and that they disclaim all intention of seeking for exclusive privileges in Manchuria, or departing from the assurances given in regard to that province.

London Underground Railway—Electrification.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state when the system of electric traction will be introduced on the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I have been in communication with the two railway companies referred to, and in reply the Metropolitan Railway Company inform me that they are proceeding rapidly with the equipment of electric traction on their part of the Inner Circle, and on a section of their extension line to Harrow, and that the working of the railway by electricity depends upon the completion of their generating station at Neasden, with which considerable progress has been made, and which, according to the contract, is to be finished by the end of the year. The Metropolitan District Railway Company state that they expect to open a section of their line, six miles in length, between South Harrow and Ealing, for electrical working in the course of a few weeks, and add that the working of the main line by electric traction depends upon the date of the completion of the Power House at Lot's Road, Chelsea, which is being pressed forward with the greatest possible speed.

Bankrupt Aliens.

Mr. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will grant the Return respecting Bankrupt Aliens in Great Britain which appears on to-day's Notice Paper.

The Return referred to is as follows:—Aliens (Bankruptcy), Return of the number of Aliens who have become Bankrupt in Great Britain since the year 1890, of the total amount of liabilities involved, and of the assets realised in these cases.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I fear I cannot grant the Return asked for by the hon. Member, as the statistical records of the Bankruptcy Department do not enable them to distinguish aliens from other bankrupts. I understand, however, that the Senior Official Receiver in Bankruptcy is about to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, and I would suggest to my hon. friend that he should allow his Motion for a Return to stand over for a short time. During the interval I will communicate with the Official Receivers, and see whether it would be possible to give some of the information desired, at any rate for a period of two or three years.

Licensing in Worcestershire.

Colonel LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the decision of the Licensing Committee of Worcestershire in the cases of the ancient towns of Upton-on-Severn and Shipston-on-Stour, whereby those towns which since the Act of 1874 have been determined to be populous places, and which are four or five hundred over 1,000 inhabitants, are declared to be no longer populous places, and so reduced to the position of villages; and whether, seeing that there has been no alteration of density, nor decrease of population, nor exceptional drunkenness, he can reinstate the towns in their former position.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE HOME OFFICE (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.): I have received a report which shows that the decision of the County Licensing Committee was arrived at after repeated hearing and full consideration, and the matter is not one in which the Secretary of State can exercise any authority.

Postage on Periodicals to Canada.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, in view of the fact that the postal rates on periodicals are less from Canada to Great Britain and Ireland than from Great Britain and Ireland to Canada, and of the representations from the Canadian Government praying for a reduction of these rates, he can extend any hope that a reduction will shortly be made.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I have given this subject very careful consideration. I appreciate the great importance, politically as well as commercially, of facilitating the circulation of our newspapers and periodicals in Canada, and I should have been very glad if I could have adopted the Canadian rates for such matter; but our present rates for newspapers and periodicals sent from this country to Canada are, except in the case of registered newspapers, the same as those charged for the transmission of printed matter within the United Kingdom. Even with the present limits of weight the ½d. post is not remunerative, and, after careful consideration of all the circumstances, I regret that I cannot see my way to its extension generally, nor do I think I should be justified in making special arrangements for the transmission of newspapers and periodicals to Canada only, at rates lower than those in force within the United Kingdom. I am, however, considering whether some increase might not be allowed in the weight now carried for a penny both within and without the United Kingdom.

Glycerinated Calf Lymph.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he will state on what terms glycerinated calf lymph is supplied or sold by the Local Government Board to medical practitioners in private practice other than public vaccinators.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk): The glycerinated calf lymph issued by the Local Government Board is not sold. It is only supplied to Public Vaccinators for use in vaccinations performed by them in that capacity, and no charge is made for it.

National Vaccine Establishment.

MR WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, seeing that under the Medical Department of the Local Government Board Vote there are two separate items for contingencies of £800 and £2,000, the former item under Sub-Head R, National Vaccine Establishment, and the latter under Sub-Head S, will he state in more detail the nature of this expenditure.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: The two amounts referred to are intended to meet any temporary extension of staff at the vaccine establishments of the Local Government Board, and the cost of purchasing and keeping additional calves, and any extra incidental expenses which may be rendered necessary if smallpox continues to prevail, and there is in consequence an excessive demand for lymph. It is impracticable to state in detail what sums may be required on these accounts.

Clifford's Inn.

Mr. REA (Gloucester): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he will explain why he has assented to a scheme for the sale of Clifford's Inn; and whether he will consider the advisability of formulating an alternative scheme by which the property would be vested in the Charity Commissioners, the buildings preserved, and the revenues applied to the purposes of the Trust.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs): My assent to the scheme for the sale of Clifford's Inn was given on the ground that, having regard to the great change of circumstances since the Institution was founded, and the age and character of the buildings, it could not be properly utilised for the purposes of legal education in any other way. The order of the Court is final, and I have neither the power nor the desire to re-open it. I may add that the alternative scheme suggested in the Question is, in my opinion, quite impracticable, and it certainly would not be for the advantage of the Trust, as it would involve the perpetuation of an obsolete system. So long as the Society continues to exist, its members would have certain rights and privileges inconsistent with the full utilisation of the property for the purposes of the charity. The buildings are in such a condition that their upkeep would absorb funds which might be more usefully employed. I could not have rejected the opportunity afforded by the willingness of the members to extinguish the Society, and put an end to an institution which, however beneficial when it was established, had become obsolete, without sacrificing the interests of the charitable trust for legal education which is in my care.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he proposes on this important and interesting question to lay any statement before the House, or whether the House will be given any opportunity of expressing an opinion on the scheme of legal education which it is understood is in contemplation.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: I do not think the matter is so far advanced that I could with advantage make any statement at the present.

Mr. W. R. PEEL (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether, in view of the fact that the sum of £45,000 only is to be handed over to him for the purposes of legal education out of the proceeds of the sale of Clifford's Inn, he will state in what manner has this sum been arrived at; whether the total estimated value of Clifford's Inn is £100,000 or more; and what is the number of the members of Clifford's Inn among whom the balance of the money is to be divided.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: My hon. friend's Question is based upon a misapprehension of fact. The share of the proceeds applicable to the purposes of legal education is not restricted to £45,000, nor to any other sum. A certain proportion of the proceeds is under the order of the Court to be applied for the payment of expenses connected with the winding up of the society, and in compensation to members for the loss of certain advantages which they enjoyed while the society continued to exist. Their consent to the sale was necessary, and the terms embodied in the order of the Court are, in my judgment, fair to all parties, and for the advantage of the trust for legal education which it is my duty to protect. The property is no doubt a very valuable one, but it is not for me to attempt to fix a figure—the larger the price paid the better for legal education.

Mr. REA asked whether it was not the fact that the conduct of the scheme was in the hands of the Attorney-General, and that until the Incorporated Law Society had notice nothing was known of the proceedings.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: Certainly, the usual procedure was followed. In all these matters the Attorney-General is entrusted with the bringing forward of a scheme. In this case the Law Society, which might be concerned, were also consulted.

Mr. REA asked whether only the Law Society were allowed to put in an appearance.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I do not know who else could appear.

Irish Rate Collections.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the existing rule which obliges collectors to close there accounts for the first moiety of the rates on or before the 30th September in each year entails hardship upon ratepayers in agricultural districts, who find it inconvenient to meet rates before their corn is harvested; and whether the Local Government Board will consider the advisability of extending the period to the 31st October.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N., for Mr. WYNDHAM): The financial half-years in the case of County and District Councils are fixed by the Local Government Act of 1898, and the orders made thereunder, and terminate on the 30th September and 31st March. The Board have no power to vary these dates. I cannot admit that the inconvenience mentioned has arisen. The rates necessary to meet the expenditure of the half-year must be lodged within the half-year.

Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tradesmen employed in Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum are compelled to work every second week for ninety-nine hours fifty-five minutes, and for seventy-seven and a half hours during each of the other weeks; and that they have to discharge the duties of attendant during portion of the day, in addition to performing their work as tradesmen; and whether he will cause inquiry into the matter, with the object of limiting their duty to the work of their respective trades and lessening their hours of labour.

*MR. ATKINSON: I have called for a Report on this matter, but, not having yet received it, will ask the hon. Member to postpone the Question till to-morrow.

Housing Accommodation in Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the city of Galway is disfigured by ruins covering a large area; and that the urban council is powerless to deal with the question, seeing that the owners refuse to sell, and will take no steps towards placing the ruined houses in a fit condition; and whether, in view of the need for additional house accommodation in the district, and the pressure of the rates upon those who have improved their lots and properties, he will take steps to enable the urban council to deal effectively with the matter.

*MR. ATKINSON: An adequate remedy for the state of things mentioned seems to be provided by the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, but even if further legislation be necessary, no undertaking can be given to introduce it this session.

Castlerea Railway Inquiry.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that at an inquiry held recently in Castlerea into the circumstances of an accident to a train on the Midland Great Western of Ireland Railway Company, representatives of the Press were excluded; and, if so, will he say whether this is in accordance with precedent; and if so, whether, in view of the public interest at stake, he will direct that in future at all such inquiries representatives of the Press shall be admitted.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Inquiries such as that to which the hon. Member refers are held, primarily, for the information of the Board of Trade, and it is at the discretion of the officer holding the inquiry to decide whether he will allow representatives of the Press to attend. Under ordinary circumstances the Board's officers do admit the Press to their inquiries, but where, as in the present case, allegations have been made that point to the possibility of legal proceedings becoming necessary, the officer may deem it his duty to hold his inquiry in private, and it would be undesirable to fetter his discretion. The report of the inquiry will, of course, be ultimately presented to Parliament and issued to the Press.

Mountmellick Mail Delays.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the mail delivery to Mountmellick, due at 9 a.m., has not arrived latterly until 12 o'clock noon; and whether he will take steps to prevent this irregularity.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: During the last two months the day mail has on eight occasions been late in arrival at Mountmellick owing to irregularity in the service from London to Dublin. In most cases the delay was unavoidable, but on one occasion the railway company appeared to be in fault. I am considering an arrangement which may perhaps reduce the risk of delay to the mail service on Thursday mornings when mails for America are conveyed. Everything possible will be done to maintain the regularity of the service.

The Hague Convention and Anglo-Russian Disputes.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that by the Hague Convention of 29th July, 1899, which established a Permanent Arbitral Court at the Hague, His Majesty's Government agreed with the Russian Government and other Governments that they would use all their efforts to ensure the peaceable settlement of international differences, and that they especially recommended by Article IX. that in differences involving neither honour nor vital interests, and arising from a divergence of opinion on points of fact, such differences should be referred for report to an International Commission of Inquiry, they will now consider the advisability of proposing to the Russian Government a reference to the arbitral jurisdiction of the Hague of the questions which have recently arisen relative to the claims and position of Russia in Manchuria. I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, have His Majesty's Government considered, or will they consider, the advisability of proposing to the Russian Government to refer to the Hague Tribunal of Arbitral Jurisdiction the pending questions affecting the interests of the two countries in Persia, in Afghanistan, in Asia Minor, and in the Dardanelles?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In reply to my hon. friend I would say that, while the Government are desirous of using to the utmost the advantages given to international relations by the constitution of The Hague tribunal, we do not think any of the questions now pending between us and Russia are of a kind which that tribunal could usefully deal with.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Has the right hon. Gentleman in mind the special form of tribunal I refer to—the International Commission of Inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite appreciate the hon. Member's supplementary question, but I do not think it modifies the general view indicated in my first answer.

PISTOLS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, for the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 138.)

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. (No. 138.)

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed [Bill 172.]

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Sir John Dorrington be discharged, and that Mr. Hayes Fisher be added to the Committee. — (*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

POOR PRISONERS DEFENCE BILL.

The Select Committee on the Poor Prisoners Defence Bill was nominated of, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Black, Mr. Bousfield, Colonel Bowles, Mr. Duke, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Kimber, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. William Redmond, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

SUPPLY [7th ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,895,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies, including South African Compensation Claims, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said there was some little difficulty in discussing the question of Somaliland at full length, as various decisions had been given in Committee upon the propriety of discussing the policy of any undertaking promoted by the Government upon Estimates which only provided for part of the cost thereof. In order to prevent misapprehension he therefore asked for the ruling of the Chairman as to whether the discussion on this Vote must be limited to the military policy.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Strictly speaking, the debate on this Vote ought to be limited to the policy which is being pursued with regard to military operations; and the policy which led to the undertaking of the expedition in Somaliland is one which would properly come under the Foreign Office Vote. Obviously, however, the two matters are so closely connected that it is almost impossible to divide them. The result of dividing them would be, I understand, to cause every hon. Member to bisect his speech and deliver half on this Vote and half on the subsequent Vote, and that would clearly be very inconvenient. As I understand that there is a general desire on the part of the Committee to discuss the whole question, I do not propose this afternoon to place any obstacles in the way, or to enforce the strict observance of the rule.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the Committee were greatly indebted to the Chairman for his ruling. For four years this country had been undertaking expeditions of this kind without the attention of the House being directed to them. The Foreign Office and the War Office, and, at a more remote period, the India Office, had all had a hand in the operations, and it was not surprising that the work had resulted in something like a muddle of the first order. The Prime Minister was the first person to attract public attention to this question, when, in February of the present year, he stated that the people did not take nearly so much interest in Somaliland as they did in Venezuela, although the cost of the operation in the former country, both in money and in men, and the effect thereof, would be far more wide reaching. Thus, at last, was the attention of the country—and he used the words "at last" deliberately—directed to what was going on in that little-known country. He was not quite sure he might not also say that the attention of the Government, as well as of the country, was thus first directed to the matter. He would not weary the House at any length with the history of past events, but since three Blue-books had been presented, not one of which had ever been discussed, and as the subject was very little understood, he hoped he would be pardoned for briefly referring to what had taken place. The Protectorate of Somaliland seemed to have been acquired about the year 1884, but the first notice this country had of the existence of that part of the British Empire was in 1894, although for six years there had been a treaty in existence with France, laying down our sphere of influence in that part of the world. The country was further delimited by an agreement or treaty which was entered into with Abyssinia in 1897. The Mullah, who for some extraordinary reason which had never been clearly explained was called the Mad Mullah—and anybody whose proceedings were less mad from his own point of view he could not imagine—was a man of good standing in his own country. He possessed exceptional influence and had acquired an extraordinary amount of control over the tribes, by most cruel methods, no doubt. Up to the year 1899 the Mullah had been regarded as rather friendly to our influence, but then he began to trouble our boundaries and became so notorious and so troublesome that in that year Consul-General Sadler suggested to the Government that it should have a military promenade through Somaliland for the purpose of impressing the natives. We had since that time had three military promenades, and the last of these was not yet over. These promenades were undertaken by the Government without any idea of what they would cost, and two of them have already involved an outlay of something like a million sterling. At that time the Mullah had a comparatively small following, 3,000 or 4,000 men, with a very few rifles. He was, consequently, from a military point of view more or less insignificant, and the Government, hampered, no doubt, in other parts of the world, paid little or no attention to the recommendations of Consul-General Sadler.

In November 1900 came the second important event, the murder of Mr. Jenner in Jubaland, a country which was sufficiently adjacent to the Mullah's country to induce a further outbreak of disturbances in Somaliland. An expedition was sent to Jubaland to avenge Mr. Jenner's death, and the officer commanding fell into precisely the same trap Colonel Plunkett had unfortunately fallen into during the last few days. He was severely handled by the tribes, and was brought back in a great hurry by the Foreign Office. The expedition terminated in a way which was certainly not satisfactory to the Foreign Office, and did not add to the glory of our arms. So far as this House knew that was the termination of that particular campaign, for no report of the subsequent proceedings had ever been presented to Parliament. If the Under Secretary to the Foreign Office was prepared to give a little more information as to what had been going on in that part of the world they would gladly welcome it. But things had evidently been going on from bad to worse. In December, 1900, Consul-General Sadler reported that there was

> "No hope of order or tranquillity until the Mullah is definitely suppressed."

That report was supported by another report from Colonel Harrington, our agent in Abyssinia, who telegraphed home to the Foreign Office—

> "Situation become intolerable. Delay tended so to increase Mullah's force that costly expedition would eventually be needed."

That surely was a strong warning to the Foreign Office, which should not have been neglected, that some effective steps were necessary to be taken immediately.

He would like for a moment to explain the difficulties which undoubtedly arose in connection with military operations in that part of the world. The interior of that country—The Haud—was a high plateau 3,000 feet above the sea level. For six months it was waterless, and in that period it was a very difficult country for troops to be manœuvred in. During the remaining six months of the year there was an abundance of rain and pasturage, and that rendered it all the more difficult to capture or to drive the Mullah into a corner. Undoubtedly if military operations in that part of the world were to be successful, they ought to take place after the rains had begun. It was noteworthy that the Administrator told the Government in connection with the present expedition that it ought not to start until April 18th. But the Foreign Office disregarded that advice, as it always did the advice of its local experts, and started the expedition two months before that time. To that he thought might fairly be attributed some of the difficulties experienced in connection with transport and water. He did not know, too, whether he might not also fairly blame the War Office in this connection. Now he would ask them to go back to the original expedition of March, 1901. The column consisted of 1,100 Somali levies, and 1,000 spearmen, under the command of seventeen British officers. But by that time the Mullah's forces had increased to 1,200 horse, and 6,000 foot. Both Consul-General Sadler and Colonel Harrington implored the Foreign Office to finish the matter right off. But Lord Lansdowne "entirely deprecated the extension of operations far into the Haud." No doubt in coming to that decision the noble Lord was guided, not so much by what was occurring in Somaliland, as by events in other parts of the world. But what did the Foreign Office hope to accomplish by only pursuing the Mullah to a particular point, and allowing him another opportunity of gathering his forces to a head. In June, 1901, Colonel Swayne defeated the Mullah, and Lord Lansdowne thereupon telegraphed to him—

> "That he would not undertake the administration of the interior, but would await local opinion before deciding what to do with regard to the town of Burao."

Now this town, although apparently a somewhat important place, was not to be found on the map which had been placed in the tea-room under the auspices of the Foreign Office. Colonel Swayne recommended the retention of the place, in order to prevent the Mullah re-concentrating his forces, and also to protect the tribes who were friendly to us, who had to a certain extent helped us, and who were absolutely powerless to defend themselves, being without arms, the importation of which we had prevented, although the Mullah had been able clearly to get a supply smuggled in for himself. He would like to read a quotation from Command Paper 1394, dealing with a despatch received on 19th August, 1901. Colonel Swayne said—

> "Had you seen your way to allow me some latitude the Mullah would have been so weakened as to be incapable of again subjecting the tribes. As it is we have not seen the last of the Mullah."

With that last sentence the Government would probably agree, though they might have seen the last of the Mullah had they adopted the "local" opinion to which they professed to attach so much importance. There was another ground on which the necessity for following local opinion might be pressed. Somaliland was almost the only Protectorate in the whole of the Empire which paid its way. Up to 1898, it not only paid its way, but presented a fair surplus, which the Secretary of State for India absorbed into the revenues of India without saying much about it. He had searched in vain for any financial statement, since that date, of the position of the Protectorate, but he believed it paid its way, and had some small surplus local revenue from which the protection of the frontier would be paid for. The Protectorate, therefore, had not been a considerable, if any, charge upon Imperial funds.

In September, 1901, Lord Lansdowne, having, on one pretext or another, refused to administer the interior or to protect the frontier, reaped his reward. Within eight weeks of his decision, a telegram came from the authorities in Somaliland that the Mullah had broken out again, that he had a force, not of 7,000, but of 12,000, and that the situation was extremely dangerous and awkward. The local officers had done what Lord Lansdowne had told them not to do. They had held Burao, and at that place the Mullah was temporarily checked. Colonel Swayne was re-appointed to the command, and went out with these orders:—

> "The Government did not wish to be drawn into the pursuit of the Mullah, and the operations were to be of a defensive character."

What was the comment of both Colonel Swayne and the then Consul-General, Mr. Cordeaux. Colonel Swayne said—

> "This defensive policy is only possible temporarily."

and the Consul-General added—

> "If it was adopted the situation would only become aggravated to a dangerous degree."

One would have thought that that, coming on top of the other recommendations, would have been sufficient to arouse the Government to the dangerous position into which they were drifting. Not a bit of it, on 31st December, 1901, Lord Lansdowne again protested against a forward movement, because—

> "He would not take the risk attaching thereto."

The synchronisation of events was very curious. The South African war being practically terminated, the Government apparently awoke to their duties in another part of the world. In April they first seemed to realise that any measures were necessary, and they did what they ought to have done long before. They began by policing the Somali coast with British and Italian ships. In May they sent out a stronger expedition from Burao, and brought up from Central Africa reinforcements of the King's African Rifles and other negro corps. But so little importance did the Government attach to the undertaking that the troops were rationed only for four months. They had already been in the country ten months, and were likely to remain there another ten months. Alarm on the part of the Government was justified, because a naval officer employed on the coast reported—

> "It might be years before the Mullah's power could be stamped out, owing to his mobility, armed strength, and influence."

Colonel Swayne, who had been hunting the Mullah since May, 1902, said—

> "The Mullah's prestige has been greatly increased, and the troops are in a state of abject terror."

Nothing could be stronger than this language, and in October, 1902, the Government, realising the scrape into which they were getting themselves and the country, sent out General Manning, and only just in time. He had hardly left this country when the news came of Colonel Swayne's defeat at Erego, with a loss of one or two maxims and many camels, and the Somali levies to whom the Government had hitherto entrusted the conduct of the campaign were described by Colonel Swayne as being—

> "So shaken by the Mullah's successes as to be entirely untrustworthy in future in close fighting."

Reinforcements were then hurried up, Regular troops and a Camel Corps were brought from India—the very corps which Colonel Swayne had two years before suggested should be sent.

An entirely new phase of the proceedings was now entered upon. In August 1902, the Italian Government were approached. The really important point was that the Government were to undertake a series of operations entirely outside the British Empire. The Government offered their co operation to Italy without asking anything in return except leave to use one of their ports. The Government practically said—"Let us operate in your territory and use one of your ports; we will bear the whole of the cost and supply the men; all you have to do is to look on, and gladly take the result of the losses which will fall on us." That was an extraordinary position for the Government to take up, and whatever explanation there must be, was not patent to anyone whose sources of information were confined to the White Books supplied by the Government. Even then Government did not seem fully to realise the importance of the operations, because in their memorandum to Sir Rennell Rodd they said—

> "The operations would not necessarily result in the Mullah's capture, but they would check his growing power."

It was something to be thankful for that the Foreign Office recognised that the Mullah's power was growing, but the preparations they made to check it were not adequate. The Mullah's forces now amounted to 3,000 mounted riflemen, and probably from 50,000 to 80,000 spearmen, a very formidable force for the body at Colonel Manning's disposal to cope with.

Passing from the Foreign Office part of the proceedings, he desired to refer to certain defects in the military operations connected with the present expedition. Obbia was a most unsuitable place at which to land troops. Five or six vessels, and many thousands of pounds worth of stores, had actually been lost in the process of debarkation. In fact, the port had been found to be so unsuitable that the base had been broken up, and the stores abandoned or destroyed, thus imposing a severe financial loss upon this country, and involving the troops in a serious shortage of supplies and transport. Not only in the past, but in the present operations, the skill, courage, and resources of the enemy had been greatly under estimated. About 2,300 men were sent to a country 500 miles long and 350 miles wide, to operate against an enemy who was certainly able, full of resource, extremely mobile, and which commanded a force of between 80,000 and 90,000 men. Surely the disparity of forces was far too great when it was remembered that not more than 300 of our troops were Europeans. There were a few Indian troops, but dependence was chiefly placed upon negroes from Central Africa. He did not think the military conduct of affairs in Somaliland had been altogether satisfactory, and the general officer commanding ought to have taken more precautions. In the case of the two previous disasters our troops were led into precisely the same trap as Colonel Plunkett, and the Somalis invariably adopted the same tactics. Their tactics were to retire before our forces, and when our advance guard had thoroughly separated from the main body they fell upon our troops in the thickest bush and overwhelmed them. They had suffered three disasters from the same cause, and in his opinion there ought to have been strict orders issued to take precautions against traps of the same sort in the future. What was not patent to General Manning was patent to Reuter's correspondent, who, on the 18th of March wrote :—

> "The Mullah is playing a waiting game, in the hope that he may lure the force into a trap, when a repetition of the scenes at Erego may happen."

That prediction had been fulfilled to the very letter. He thought that ought to have been provided against by the military officers in charge of this expedition. The subject was an unhappy one, and one upon which the House was not able to comment satisfactorily, but it was a fact which it could not afford to neglect in view of the other operations which it was certain would have to take place.

The only other question was, were they going to hold this country or were they not? There were reasons both ways, but upon the balance of such evidence as he was able to get he thought that the answer was that they must hold it. In the first place it was the outlet to a very considerable trade with the hinterland. The total trade of this country was not very large, but it was an expanding trade, and the importance of the hinterland was emphasised by the fact that the French had built a railway to tap the trade which would have an outlet at the Port of Jibuti. Not only this country but other countries attached importance to this trade, and it would be a considerable factor in the conclusion which must be arrived at upon this point. Another point was that this territory was so dangerously near the outlet of the Red Sea that they could not afford to allow any other European power to control it. He knew that was a debatable point, but upon the balance of evidence he thought it would be impossible for them to allow any other European power to occupy that territory. The other alternative was to allow the country to pass into the hands of the Abyssinians, but it was by no means certain that Abyssinia could hold its own against the Mullah. The Mullah's rule had been described as giving "a precarious existence of life and property with frequent retaliatory raids, destroying all human and animal life." They did not desire that state of things repeated in Somaliland. For that reason he thought they were bound to keep possession of the country. He wanted to see some real arrangement made whereby if they were to continue to protect the Italian frontier, and their own, against the Mullah the Italians should join with them adequately in regard to providing both money and men. He did not see why this country should be turned into national philanthropists going about doing everybody's dirty work, collecting the debts of one country and performing the police work of another. They had got quite enough on their own hands without interfering in other people's affairs, and if they were to continue to protect the Italians from the Mullah, Italy ought to co-operate with them in every possible way. He suggested to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that there ought to be adequate protection of the frontier. The past revenues of the country justified spending a certain amount of money upon the protection of the country, and if that policy was followed then he thought there would be a cessation of disturbances and disasters discreditable to our rule and harmful to our finances.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item L be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

*The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The hon. Gentleman, in the speech he has just delivered to the Committee, has complained that the Government has not given, as I understood him, sufficient information. I think the hon. Member himself will recognise from the Blue books that we have not been backward in producing all the official papers dealing with the subject, and that we have given all the information in our power to the House of Commons and the country. I am well aware that although the Foreign Office presents many Blue-books, there are very few hon. Members who have the time to read them; but I think the hon. Gentleman himself has evidently read them and studied them with some care. I am afraid, however, that I cannot agree with the conclusions which the hon. Member has drawn from those Blue-books. The hon. Gentleman has spoken of the reasons which originally led us to occupy the Somali coast. In the first place Berbera was occupied because it afforded a convenient place from which to draw the necessary provisions for the garrison of Aden, but though that was perhaps the original view it was not the only reason which led us to retain that position. The hon. Gentlemen himself has appreciated that, and a glance at the map will show the importance of Somaliland from an international point of view. There can be no doubt that if it could be conceived that the British Government should abandon Somaliland altogether, our position with regard to Abyssinia would be very seriously modified; and, in that case, hon. Gentlemen who have made themselves familiar with international politics would be able to measure the very great extent to which that would affect our position throughout the whole of Northern Africa. Our position in Somaliland is very important, whatever it was originally, but it is not intended by the British Government, and it never was intended, to extend our effective administration far into the interior. As it was, we occupied a strong strategical position, and we enjoyed a certain trade—not a very large trade but sufficient to pay its way. It was, as the hon. Gentleman has reminded the House, the only Protectorate under the Foreign Office which had hitherto paid its way, but that, of course, will be altered in the future. Under these circumstances the Government were most reluctant to enter into any policy or operation which would throw a heavy burden on the Imperial Exchequer. I was a good deal astonished at the line the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, took up, for he seemed to think that the Foreign Office was very much to blame for its reluctance to enter upon these warlike operations in Somaliland. He told the Committee that certain warnings were received from our officials, and he said to the Government: You neglected these warnings; you ought to have acted immediately with greater vigour against the Mullah, and you ought not to have exercised any restraining influence with respect to these operations. Well, Sir, I do not agree with the hon. Member, and I am perfectly certain that if the hon. Gentleman was in office, as no doubt he will be, in any of the great administrative Departments of this country, he would recognise it as an elementary axiom that you must not follow, without checking it, the advice of your officials on the spot. The officials are not to blame, because, from their point of view, the only part of the world that bulks large is the territory which they are called upon to administer, and they do not take much account of the risks we might ultimately run. What the officials contemplate is the immediate good government of the area for which they are responsible, and of course they desire the Imperial Government to enter upon expeditions and warlike operations without anything like that self-restraint which becomes the central Government. Under these circumstances the Foreign Office were eminently to be commended—I think I may say so because, personally, I was not in office at the time—when they shrank from entirely oversetting the established policy hitherto of governing the coast and merely having relations with the interior so far as trade rendered it necessary, and put off, as it were, to the last moment the undertaking of these warlike operations. But they did not reject the advice of the officials, as I think anyone who listened to the speech of the hon. Member would have been led to suppose. On the contrary, having carefully weighed and sifted the recommendations put before them, they came to the conclusion that an expedition was necessary. I am speaking of the time, as far back as 1899. An expedition was absolutely ordered and troops had been actually told off to take part in it, but the Mullah elected to retire. At that time, for some reason which was not known, his forces disappeared, and he himself retreated beyond the limits of the British Protectorate. Under these circumstances the course of the Government was obvious. The expedition was no longer called for, and they at once countermanded the preparations which had been made. That finishes what I may call the first phase of the Somaliland difficulty.

But, unfortunately, the hopes which we had entertained that the Mullah had finally retired were disappointed, and he reappeared. Fresh raids were committed and fresh atrocities were inflicted upon the friendly tribes—tribes in alliance and friendship with this country. Once more it was necessary for us to consider whether an expedition of some kind against the Mullah was not required, We were advised that it was absolutely necessary, as the hon. Gentleman has told the Committee. Once more, having weighed the matter carefully, and taken all the advice in our power, we issued the necessary orders in November for getting together those irregular troops which had to carry out the expedition. The expedition was formed, and was placed under the able command of Colonel Swayne The troops operated under very great difficulty against the Mullah, they defeated him in two or three engagements, and drove his forces headlong before them. Then it is said that we were advised to go forward and that we did not go forward, but restrained our forces and put an end to the expedition. That is perfectly true, but the hon. Gentleman, in another part of his speech, supplied the reason why we acted in that way. In his speech he criticised the Government very severely for having advanced into Italian territory and having undertaken an expedition at a great distance from the base, and he attributed the subsequent check which our arms received to our rashness in that direction. That is precisely what the Government desired to avoid when they put an end to the expedition ordered in 1900. It was because the Mullah had retreated to Mudug which, as the hon. Gentleman knows, is not in British territory, that it was impossible to carry the campaign any further. We had not even got the permission of the Italian Government to go there at that time, and even if we had, I frankly admit, my advice, of whatever value it might be, would have been strongly against the expedition being allowed to proceed any farther, and that we should do our utmost to keep these military operations within reasonable limits, both on the grounds of expense and of the loss of life which warlike operations of course entail.

That brings me to the third phase. Although we had established certain defensive posts upon a line which we took up, raids took place within a very few miles of the strongest of our defensive posts. Now that is very significant, because I do not think the Government would have entered into a campaign of the dimensions of the present campaign—I mean the c mpaign actually going on—until they had tried the defensive system. It was evidently necessary before embarking upon what I am afraid will prove to be expensive operations, that we should make some attempt to see whether, by drawing up a line of defensive posts, we could not more economically resist the incursions of the Mullah. The acting Consul-General at that time was Mr. Cordeaux. He had done exceedingly well in the difficult duties he had to perform. As soon as he received the necessary orders from His Majesty's Government he at once drew up the line for the defensive posts which we had to form. When Colonel Swayne and General Manning went out they found this defensive scheme in operation. The acting Consul-General had extended this line of defence and had increased its power by various means. Colonel Swayne and General Manning had not been, I think, a month in the country before the Mullah made yet another raid of a more vigorous character, and combined with greater loss to our friendly tribes almost, than any raid made before. It was then and not till then, as the hon. Member will remember, that our responsible military advisers on the spot, namely, General Manning and Colonel Swayne, informed us that they thought it would be impossible to deal with the situation any longer, unless the Government consented to the delivery of a counter-stroke. As soon as we got that advice the Government no longer hesitated.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: What was the date of that?

*Lord CRANBORNE: The hon. Gentleman will find it at page 6 of the White-book.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: What is the date? It is the date that is the important thing.

*Lord CRANBORNE: This advice was received in March, 1902, and the hon. Member will find Lord Lansdowne's telegram authorising the operations immediately upon this advice under the date of March 7th, 1902. Then it took some time to make the necessary preparations In dealing with Somaliland, of course a great deal depends upon the time of the year at which the grass grows It was necessary, therefore, for Colonel Swayne to wait some little time for that event to happen. I think that after that the Committee is pretty familiar with the course of the operations. After having carried out a number of subsidiary operations near the coast, Colonel Swayne entered the great valley which traverses east and west the interior of Somaliland, and once more the Mullah was driven back to Mudug. It is a great oasis in the Italian sphere where water is plentiful and grazing too. There the Mullah was accustomed to make his head-quarters and to keep his flocks and herds. By the experience which we had gained and by the successive advices of our various officers, we were driven to the conclusion that there was only one means of dealing with the Mullah, and that was to strike him at Mudug, the place where he looked for the re-equipment and refreshing, which were necessary after these raids into our territory. So Colonel Swayne had decided to advance to Mudug, but when he got to the borders of the oasis he found himself in a thick bushy country, very similar to that in which Colonel Plunkett's unfortunate engagement recently took place. His troops were surprised. The Somaliland irregulars at once fled, but the company of British Central African troops stood their ground like men and saved the situation. The consequence was that there was comparatively little loss of life so far as the British force was concerned, but the hon. Gentleman is quite accurate in stating that the Somalis were so demoralised that Colonel Swayne had no course open to him but to retire. That, shortly, is the history up to that date of the struggle between ourselves and the Mullah in Somaliland. At that point it once more became necessary for the Government carefully to consider the whole subject in all its bearings, and to consult their military advisers at home, with the view to coming to a conclusion as to what was the best policy to pursue.

I might I think, say that the most important consideration from our point of view was how could we defend the tribes whom we were bound by treaty to defend at the least possible expense to this country? I am not sure whether hon. Gentlemen know that we are bound by treaty to several tribes in Somaliland. These treaties were made many years ago. They were not the work of any one Party in the State. Both Parties had their share in making them. In the days before difficulties with the Mullah existed these treaties merely described the relations that existed between the British administration in Berbera and the tribes which surrounded it; but gradually the relations became more intimate, and finally, in 1886, a treaty was made definitely taking under the protection of the Queen-Empress certain tribes surrounding Berbera. These tribes are called in the Blue-book the Ishak tribes, and, roughly speaking, they occupy an area of country a hundred miles in every direction from Berbera. Well, after taking these tribes under the protection of the Queen-Empress, there was only one course for the Government of this country to pursue, and that was not to abandon them. I do not see how there can be any argument on a point such as that; but even if we had been dishonourable enough to abandon our friends, it would have been a most unsuccessful policy in this instance, because the abandonment of these tribes to the vengeance of the Mullah would have meant that Berbera itself would have been threatened, and would, indeed, have been rendered actually unsafe. In fact it would not have been worth holding, because the trade which is the only financial *quid pro quo* we receive from Berbera, would, of course, have entirely disappeared. Exactly the same situation which would have made it impossible to hold Eastern Somaliland would have made it impossible to hold Western Somaliland, and the whole of the Protectorate would have followed suit. I ask the Committee with what face we could hold relations with any black community in that part of Africa if we had been dishonourable enough to adopt a policy of that kind? Our whole influence would have disappeared. But not only that, on the southern side of the Somaliland Protectorate—the quarter where the Mullah's influence prevails, extends to the East African Protectorate, and that, too, would have been threatened by the Mullah.

The Mullah, with all the prestige of success, and of having driven out of Somaliland the most powerful Western nation, would, no doubt, have threatened the East African Protectorate. What course was then open to us? We might have adopted a purely defensive policy; we might have established a series of defensive posts on the frontier of British Somaliland; but when we came to inquire as to what that would mean, we found that it would mean the permanent occupation of Somaliland by 10,000 of our best troops, and the expense would have been absolutely prohibitive. The idea was therefore abandoned. If we are not to have a defensive policy or an abandonment policy, there is only one other policy left, and that is an offensive policy; namely, to attack the Mullah in his head-quarters, and render him innocuous in the future. That was the policy the Government adopted. At this point the matter passed out of the hands of the Foreign Office into the hands of the War Office.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Did the Foreign Office come to this strategical conclusion?

*Lord CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government came to it. As my hon. friend is aware, we had the best military advice which this country can produce, and we took it as I have detailed. I do not think the Foreign Office has anything to reproach itself with. It seems to me that we acted with great moderation. We did our very utmost to avoid throwing unnecessary expenditure on the tax-payers of this country, but at the same time we showed ourselves careful to fulfil our obligations and to preserve our honourable traditions. If the Committee think that in an Empire like this it is possible to avoid expeditions of this kind from time to time, they are very much mistaken. They are, of course, intensely to be regretted, and I have shown how much the Foreign Office regretted this one. But such expeditions are, on occasion, inevitable, and when these occasions arise, then the only thing we can do is to make the best plans in our power and press them on with vigour. I have shown that that is the course pursued in this case by the Foreign Office.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he was not rising to pronounce against the Government on the ground of the care they seemed to have taken before entering into these serious military operations. He thought that his hon. friend behind him had made a very able and interesting speech. He did not know whether his hon. friend desired to reproach the Government for the course they had taken, but if the hon. Gentleman did, he did not share that view. He thought the Government were perfectly right in the first instance in pausing before they took any steps at all and that there was justification for that. In the second place, he thought the Government were right to try to minimise, as far as they could, the extent of the operations they had undertaken. The real point the noble Lord had not explained, and that was why we have got into this trouble at all. The Paper before him—Africa, No. 5, 1901—contained in its very first pages the only explanation he knew of, as to the origin of this trouble, and he wished to draw attention to the circumstances. In 1899, the Consul-General at Berbera, Mr. Sadler, said that the Mullah at that time was a person of pacific disposition: a religious zealot particularly attentive to regularity in the hours of prayer, and to inducing people to abstain from intoxicating liquors. He was generally thought to be on the side of law and order, but the Consul-General seemed to think that he was then organising a religious movement antagonistic to our Administration. But there was nothing of violence. On the contrary, although he had several bad and suspicious characters with him, it was the case that he had quite readily returned to the British authorities a person who was supposed to have committed some offence, in order that that person should be tried and punished. He exhibited no sort of hostility to the British Administration, nor had he committed any act of violence. The Dolbohanti district, in which the Mullah was exercising his influence, although an integral part of the British Protectorate, was a part of the country in which we had never attempted to exercise any effective control, and had interfered but little in its affairs. He was not defending the Mullah at all, who had since been guilty of great cruelty; he was speaking of the origin of the trouble as traced in the White-book, and the circumstances under which Consul-General Sadler advised the Government to organise a military promenade. In June, Consul-General Sadler complained, not of anything in the nature of violence, but that the Mullah sought to induce some of our native officials to free themselves from their obligations to our Administration; and then Mr. Sadler went on, in his despatch to Lord Salisbury, to say—

> "At the bottom of all is the pernicious influence of this Mullah, who seeks to undermine our authority with the tribes, and impose his own, for what I cannot but consider political rather than religious motives."

Then he confirmed that suspicion by stating—

> "We have hitherto only occupied the coast towns, and depended for the exercise of our authority in the interior on such matters as we have found it necessary to interfere in, either in pressure brought to bear on the tribes in their dealings with the coast towns during the trading season, or by occasional punitive expeditions, which in each case have produced an excellent effect for two or three years."

And the Consul-General added—

> "If an openly hostile move is made by the Mullah, which I do not at present anticipate, this will have to be met by force."

He proposed to show that no hostile movement had taken place by the Mullah before the recommendation was made to send this expedition. In another despatch dated 16th July, 1899, Consul-General Sadler writes—

> "Reports have been received"

whether they were true or not, did not appear from this document—

> "that the Mullah has arrested two of our Akils, and seized the rifles of four Biladizahs, who happened to be in the vicinity with caravans. Whether the Akils went to the Mullah of their own accord, or whether they were seized by their tribes, who are hostile, and sent to him, has not yet been ascertained."

Upon that, Consul-General Sadler took certain steps on his own responsibility. He wrote:—

> "Steps have also been taken to prevent as far as possible, supplies reaching the Mullah from our coast towns."

He then proceeded to say what was somewhat inconsistent in view of the precipitate action that was taken before any act of violence on the part of the Mullah—

> "Reports in Somaliland are generally so various and so conflicting that considerable caution has to be exercised in giving them credence; but I am inclined to believe that there is some truth in these reports about the attitude of Sheikh Salih and the religious sects who are opposed to the Mullah. . . . . Raids and counter-raids are taking place between the Mahomed Aysa and the Habr Toljaaba Noh in connection with the agitation raised by this Mullah."

The next statement, in July, reported that the Mullah had gone off his head. The same report was circulated about General De Wet. It was always circulated in similar circumstances, without there being any foundation for it, although he did not think it mattered one way or the other. In August the Mullah was announced at Burao, which in the opinion of the Consul-General was a movement directly against us. Nothing further happened at that time. He had read the Papers and might have omitted something inadvertently; but, as far as he was aware, at that time there was no act of violence on the part of the Mullah. The country was not patrolled or administered by this country, and the tribes moved in it freely. It was more a sphere of influence than an actual Protectorate, because this country did not pretend to exercise any effective authority there at all. That was the situation in August, 1899. Then Consul-General Sadler spoke of the action of the Mullah as an "openly veiled revolt"—rather a strange phrase. Lord Lansdowne at that time was, wisely, he thought, not prepared to take any steps. In September, 1899, he said that the situation was somewhat less alarming; he discounted the alarmist reports of Consul-General Sadler, and he was perfectly right. In September, eight days before Lord Lansdowne had declined to take any steps, Consul-General Sadler took some steps on his own account. On page 14 of the White-book he said—

> "The danger of the position lay in the fact that the Mullah Muhammad Abdullah has made such high pretensions and claims that it was thought probable he would be forced soon to take some definite action both to try and maintain his reputation and to satisfy those of his following who had joined him for purposes of loot. . . . My first act on my return was to proclaim the Mullah a rebel and warn all persons, by proclamation in the Bazaar, that all those affording him any assistance and holding any communication with him would be severely punished. . . . All caravan communication in the affected districts has been temporarily suspended."

What took place after September, 1899, was, he thought, most unfortunate. A proclamation was issued declaring the Mullah a rebel, all persons were prohibited under pain of severe punishment from any dealing with him, and attempts were made to shut off all supplies from him—not merely supplies of arms and ammunition. There was no doubt whatever that that was the commencement of the trouble.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he was afraid the hon. Gentleman had not studied the correspondence sufficiently. In the Consul-General's despatch of September 14th, four days after the despatch quoted by the hon. Gentleman, he would see on page 21 the following:—

> "His methods are as follows; he seizes the best men of the tribes who have not declared for him, and all the property he can collect."

—this is in a country under British protection—

> "These men he beats until they agree to obey him. . . . The position of the employees of the Administration is particularly hard. The Mullah is seizing the karias, families, and property of all our servants he can find in the interior. Not content with this, I am informed he has issued a proclamation making the wives of all connected with the Administration lawful to his followers."

These were acts which the hon. and learned Gentlemen tried to persuade the Committee were not of a hostile character, and not such as to justify the Consul-General in declaring the Mullah a rebel. He thought that course was abundantly justified.

SIR ROBERT REID said he had stated that he thought the Mullah had shown great cruelty at a later stage.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Four days later.

SIR ROBERT REID said the noble Lord interrupted him, when he was answering the noble Lord's statement. He was not justifying the conduct of the Mullah, but the noble Lord forgot to tell the Committee that the persons whom the Mullah beat were tribes who had declared against him. There was no bloodshed, but there were some acts of violence, although it was only right to remember that the Consul-General himself stated that the reports were very unreliable, and ought to be received with the greatest possible caution. The point was that at the time those steps were taken by Consul-General Sadler it did not appear that any serious acts had taken place, beyond what might be expected in territories which this country did not even pretend to administer. It was under those circumstances that in September 1899 a letter was sent by the Mullah threatening war; and he undoubtedly took part in the raid. He neither now, nor had he ever, nor would he ever, say it was not the duty of the British Government to give protection, when that protection was promised. The noble Lord referred in terms of indignation to the fact that some of the tribes were beaten, but if this country were to occupy a coast territory, he would appeal to the good sense of the Government, seeing the tremendous consequences which followed military operations, whether the greatest care should not be taken before they penetrated far inland, and involved themselves in enormous and incalculable military expenditure unless some definite and unmistakable outrage had been committed which they could not pass by. The hon. Gentleman opposite thought that some hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House were indifferent to the duty and obligation of fulfilling the promises of protection given by the British Government. He could assure the hon. Gentlemen that they were mistaken with regard to that; but before the actual outbreak of hostilities, nothing of any serious moment could be pointed to, on reliable information, for which reparation might not have been obtained by opening up negotations with the Mullah. He did not complain of the dilatoriness of the Government. On the contrary when the Mullah was acting in a friendly way by sending back a prisoner who had escaped, he thought it was a great pity that some steps were not taken before this very serious danger was incurred. He would point out what the real state of things was. They had occupied a coast territory, the interior being partly a desert, and, for a part of the year, having no vegetation at all. They had heard on high authority that the task of chasing a force like that of the Mullah was one of enormous difficulty; and that it was merely good fortune if it were caught up. He did not wish to blame Consul-General Sadler. His was naturally a difficult position; and he was surrounded by those who were alarmed for their own safety and prospects; but he felt that this country would be involved in endless difficulty unless more effective supervision were exercised over our representatives in foreign countries. He would further like to ask, was it the intention of the Government to undertake the suppression of the Mullah on Italian territory without the assistance of the Italian Government? Were we taking on ourselves the whole of the business? because, so far as he could see, the Mullah was as formidable to Italy as he was to us. The noble Lord was entitled to say we were bound to extend our protection to these people with whom we had treaties, within 100 miles of Berbera. It would be inexcusable not to do it; but he wished to know how far the noble Lord or the right hon. Gentleman intended these operations should be extended, and were they to be extended in conjunction with the Italians or alone.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said it appeared to him that the interests of Italy were more in danger in this matter than those of England. On the north side of the Red Sea was British Somaliland, and on the east and south was Italian Somaliland, and to the north-west of British Somaliland was Abyssinia and the 300 square miles occupied by the Mullah seemed to be in the very centre. He could not understand why we should have made such a bad bargain with the Italians. The bargain, which was contained in page 90 of the first White Paper, was this. Two British staff officers met two Italian staff officers in conference in Rome, and this was the result—

> "The exact route to be followed in the advance from Obbia on Mudug, and the disposition of troops employed in this advance must necessarily depend on the latest intelligence of the enemy. The final decision on these points must, therefore, be left to the discretion of the Commanding Officer on the spot; but it is recognised by the British authorities that it is strategically and politically important to cut the Mullah off from the south. The importance of this view would be impressed on the General Officer Commanding the Obbia force, and he would be instructed to endeavour to make such disposition of his troops in advancing on Mudug as would be likely to force the Mullah northward or westward."

Now Obbia is a port on the coast of Italian Somaliland, nearer to the Mullah's military position than any port of ours in British Somaliland. By this agreement, therefore, we received from the Italian Government the right to land troops and stores at Obbia, and to march through Italian Somaliland against the Mullah, but we were to undertake these operations by ourselves for the purpose of driving the Mullah away from the south, where all the Italian interests lie. This seemed a very one-sided bargain, and he would ask the Secretary of State for War in his reply to explain the exact position.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) thought so far as the debate had gone there had not been such serious criticism on the conduct of affairs in Somaliland as to disturb the Government. The right hon. Gentleman opposite did not condemn the operations in Somaliland, nor did he counsel retirement. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down was loud in his praises of the cautious conduct of the Government before the operations were commenced, but neither he nor the right hon. Gentleman now suggested abandoning Somaliland. With regard to the madness of the Mullah, it was well known that the Mohammedan natives called all their inspired leaders mad; and after what had fallen from the hon. Member for Dumfries, who had told the Committee that the Mullah's madness took the form of great respect for the law and a great aversion to drink, the Government might be congratulated on the tribute they had received from the hon. Baronet the Member for Camborne, who on the previous night had referred to them as a "collection of mad Mullahs." Objection had been taken to these military promenades, but he thought they were of very great use, and with regard to the little checks that they sometimes received, he strongly objected to their being called disasters. Only two effective criticisms had come from hon. Members opposite, one of which was that our operations had been carried on on Italian territories. There was nothing sacrosanct in the phrase "sphere of influence" in international law, as such spheres were nothing but international conveniences. We could freely go into our neighbour's territory, and we should be poor creatures indeed if we did not punish the Mullah on Italian territory, having pushed him into it, upon the flimsy pretext that we could not operate upon a foreign sphere of influence. Another criticism of the hon. Member for Bristol with which he agreed was that the Foreign Office had not paid sufficient attention to the reports of the experts in Somaliland. He was not satisfied with the explanation of the noble Lord that we had to check at home the reports made out there. It seemed most remarkable that reports of men upon the spot, who knew all the conditions, should not have more attention paid to them. The operations against the Mullah would have to be continued. Consul-General Sadler would not have suggested military operations unless they had been necessary; and, having started them, it was our duty to smash the Mullah as we had smashed the Mahdi years ago in Egypt. He was the whole head and front of this unrest. It was of the utmost importance, as the Mullah had threatened to invade South-East Abyssinia, that we should assist the Abyssinians in this matter. The time might come when we might be unhappily engaged in war with a European Power on our Indian frontiers; at such a time there would undoubtedly be a hostile diversion in Egypt as well, and in such a case it would be of the highest importance to us to have Abyssinia as our friend, and by assisting Abyssinia now we should be showing our friendship to her in a most tangible form. There was another important point to which we must have regard in this matter; and that was that Somaliland was not very far distant from Aden, and if news were once carried to Aden that we were weakening before the Mullah, it would soon spread up the Persian Gulf and so to India, where very great harm would be done to the prestige of the British name. He hoped the Government would continue to prosecute their operations against the Mullah with all the force that was necessary. With reference to the management of the war by the War Office, he regretted the unfortunate remark of the Financial Secretary that it would be a big job to change the Mauser bullets. The noble Lord would find it a far bigger job if, in consequence of continuing to use bullets which did not stop these savages, many more of our soldiers were killed. This was, he believed, the first time Mauser bullets had been used against savages of the nature of the Somalis. In conclusion, he declared that our treaty engagements, our highest interests, and our prestige in the eyes of the Mohammedan subjects of the King, demanded that we should press forward until we had smashed the Mullah, and brought the Protectorate of Somaliland to the state in which every British Protectorate ought to be.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the noble Lord had given the Committee no information as to the present policy of the Government with regard to this expedition. He had spoken of a certain stage at which the Government, after two defeats, had felt it necessary to consider the question in all its aspects, apparently giving the Committee to understand that it had not before been so considered. The noble Lord further stated that the Government hesitated before agreeing to overstep the established policy in Somaliland. What was the established policy?

LORD CRANBORNE: The old policy was to govern the coast, and meddle with the interior only so far as was necessary to our interests.

MR. DILLON said it was hard that the Committee should now be called upon for the third time to vote money for this expedition, without being told what the new policy was. The practice of the present Government was to draw the people of the country into expeditions and large military operations, without taking them into their confidence as to the policy underlying those expeditions, and thereby enabling them to make some estimate as to the ultimate liabilities entailed. Of late years we had been emphatically reminded of the truth of the remark of the noble Lord that it was impossible for a great Empire like the British to be carried on without occasional expeditions.

The temple of war had never been closed since the Government came into office, and it never would be as long as they remained in power. No sooner was one expedition concluded than another started in some other part of the world, and the settled policy of the Government was to conceal the ultimate object of the expeditions and the policy underlying them, and to misrepresent the probable liabilities and cost of the military operations. The whole cost of the Boer War was to be £10,000,000, and it was to be paid off within two years. £50,000 was asked for for the present expedition. Would the Secretary of State for War pledge his word that the country would get out of it for twenty times £50,000? Why did not the Government put down a sum which they honestly thought might carry them through the operations? To put down such a sum as £50,000 was an attempt to deceive the taxpayers, and he should be greatly surprised if the year closed without an expenditure of £1,000,000 having been incurred. The vicious system of grossly and flagrantly under-estimating the cost of these expeditions was one of the causes of the outrageous increase in the expenditure of the country which was now seriously embarrassing the Government and threatening their destruction. Who was the Mullah? What was the original cause of the trouble? The country was led step by step into such a position that they could not turn back, without there being made, at a time when Parliament could consider whether or not the operations should be initiated, any proper statement of the grounds on which these expeditions were undertaken. Who was the Mullah? A letter had appeared in the Press, professing to have been written by the Mullah himself, in which he said he was not mad, that he was an Hungarian officer, that the reason peace had reigned for a time was that he had gone to Hungary for a vacation, and that he would soon return to Somaliland. Now that on more than one occasion disaster had overtaken the British forces, he assumed it was impossible for the Government to draw back until they had, to some extent, re-established their position. But they ought to tell the Committee how far they intended to go, and what was to be the end of the campaign. Did they intend to undertake the administration of this semi-desert country, with all the expense and trouble therein involved?

The one other question to which he wished to refer was the recurrence of that savage instrument of warfare—the dum-dum bullet. By persistent effort three or four members on that side of the House had driven the dum-dum bullet out of the British Army, and they would not allow its re-introduction without a struggle. Hon. Members opposite seemed to take up the position that it was lawful for a civilised and so-called Christian nation, when fighting against savages or semi-civilised people, to adopt methods of warfare which, by the universal consent of Christendom, were denied to European Powers. The dum-dum bullet was condemned by all civilised people. At the time of the South African war, although they had determined to use the dum-dum bullet, and many millions of them had been sent out, the Government were forced, by the public opinion of Europe, to withdraw that ammunition. How far would the proposition of hon. Members carry them? If they threw aside in one particular, the limitations on methods of warfare imposed by the growth of civilisation and the common conscience of mankind, where were they to stop? If they could use dum-dum bullets, why not explosive bullets? Where was the difference between expanding and explosive bullets? They were classed in the same category by The Hague Convention. If the use of expanding or explosive bullets was permissible, were they to be allowed to poison the enemy? If not, why not? Experience of human nature and the teaching of history showed that once men were allowed to go beyond the rigid limits laid down, they would stop at nothing. Were they to be allowed to kill all their prisoners and slaughter the wounded? Were they to be allowed to poison the wells? Why not? if they were allowed to use weapons which were forbidden by civilised warfare. There was a principle at stake, because when they once transgressed the limits which civilisation had placed upon the barbarity of war, their military commanders would apply those practices to civilised warfare. They saw this in South Africa.

Mr. MALCOLM: Who saw it?

Mr. DILLON said a great many surgeons and scientific men saw it, and the effect of these bullets had been observed by scientific men who had made experiments upon animals. There was no difficulty about the hon. Member getting at the facts. Having used these uncivilised methods of warfare on Indians, and on the wild tribes in the Soudan, they next proposed to use them on white men in South Africa, and would have done so had not the raising of the question in this House made it impossible. This was the kind of poison which made men absolutely forget all the progress humanity had made during the last two centuries. War was a horrible thing which was too lightly treated by the Imperialists of this country. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] He did not mean it in any offensive sense. When nations went to war they laid aside the New Testament and did all kinds of things which were inconsistent. In spite of all that, a certain influence had permeated all Christian nations, and it was one of the greatest and most sacred treasures of humanity that had been given them by modern progress. In one direction they had made progress, and that was that the horrors, the atrocities, and the barbarities of war had been considerably mitigated and ameliorated in recent times. Now they were going back upon that record, and resorting to methods of warfare, against savages, which had been banned and forbidden by the onward progress of humanity and by regard for human suffering. When they saw a great nation like England in conflict with a barbarian nation saying that they could not manage without using bullets that tore to pieces, and which were not allowed to be used in modern warfare, then they would realise how deadly and subtle this poison was, and how it was capable of corrupting the most civilised and humane of modern people. He appealed to the House not to listen to the military experts, but to insist upon conducting this war against these savages without staining our name by the use of these abominable instruments called dum-dum bullets, thus shocking humanity by going back on the path of progress.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) thought the hon. Member for Mayo had drawn a very imaginative picture. He had suggested that this question of bullets might lead on to poisoning wells, murdering the wounded, and killing prisoners.

Mr. DILLON: What I said was that these other methods could be defended by the same kind of argument.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he did not think the use of these bullets would lead to barbarities of that description. He wished to know whether the complaint published in General Manning's dispatch on Monday last had been found to be well-founded as the result of further inquiry addressed to General Manning; whether the right hon. Gentleman had any reply to that inquiry; whether General Manning substantiated the previous complaint; and what action was the Secretary of State for War going to take? It had not been suggested that the British troops should be furnished with explosive bullets, or any bullets that would do unnecessary damage to the foe. The hon. Member for Mayo seemed to think that the use of these bullets was against the common conscience of mankind, but the only reference to this subject was contained in paragraph E, Article 23, Section 2 of the Hague Convention, which prohibited the employment of arms of the nature to cause "superfluous injuries." If they engaged in civilised warfare the only thing that was desirable was to use sufficient force to disable your enemy. They did not want to kill, and it was better to only wound the enemy. The question was, could they apply the same treatment to civilised soldiers as to savages. In the case of the Mullah's followers their main idea was to get killed in order to secure more favourable quarters in another world. Of course we did not share that belief; neither did we think it would increase our chances in the other world if we unnecessarily risked our lives in this. The bullets referred to had very little effect upon savages. The clause he had referred to merely said that they must not use a bullet which would cause superfluous injuries. It was well known that in the Soudan campaign the solid Martini-Henry bullet was not sufficient to stop the Soudanese in their wild charges.

The question was, were they to equip their troops with ammunition which was sufficient to prevent them being placed at a disadvantage. War was not a game of golf in which it was desirable to handicap one's opponents in order that they should be able to compete on equal terms. In war the object was to defeat the enemy, and to win, and he submitted it was the duty of the British Government to supply the troops with means to carry on its wars in an effective way, so long as those means did not transgress the rules of war. In this case the rules had not been broken. The only rules of which we had any cognisance, and which were recognised by civilised warfare, were the rules drawn up by the Hague Convention. A savage could not be disabled by an ordinary bullet. Therefore it was necessary to use greater force. He hoped the Secretary of State for War would tell the House what information had been received from General Manning on this point, and if his complaint had been substantiated he ventured to appeal to him not to handicap our men in order to satisfy what he could only call a feeling of sickly sentimentality.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said the statement of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs was candid and clear so far as it went. Still, it did not supply the information required to judge accurately of past events, or to suggest what policy the Government contemplated now. The Committee must also desire to hear something from the Secretary of State for War on the incidental point raised by the hon. Member for Mayo, and which he thought they need not discuss until they heard the facts. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell them that, to quote the words of the last speaker, they had not made their chances worse in the world to come by the use of a bullet condemned by The Hague Convention. He should also like to hear from the Secretary for War why it was that an adequate provision of artillery and supplies was not sent with the expedition, which would have saved it from the misfortune into which it had fallen. Our position in Somaliland had been, for the past four years, a record of growing and extending difficulties and dangers. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said that position was inevitable. He did not think it was. At any rate, it was not unprecedented. It was the old story. It was exactly what had happened over and over again in our experience in uncivilised countries. Those who remembered the debates with regard to the Mahdi in the Soudan, and the debates on the outbreaks on the North-West frontier of India knew exactly how the phenomena of these cases had repeated themselves. In this case we began by establishing a coast Protectorate, and we did it with good intentions and on good grounds. One of the great difficulties Britain always had in the East was that we were continually coming into conflict, in Mohammedan countries, with the religious question which was as serious a trouble as it was at home in the matter of elementary education. The Mullah, as a religious fanatic, seemed to be something between a Trappist and a teetotaller. He obtained an enormous influence over his followers by preaching a jehad against the infidels. There were two courses open to the Government when, three or four years ago, the power of the Mullah began to grow, and one of these was a strictly defensive policy. He was said to be mad, but there had never been a case of madness having so much method. The Government ought to have adhered to their strictly defensive policy. It was to rely upon the sea and hold the country immediately adjacent, at the same time endeavouring to stop the traffic in arms, which enabled the Mullah to add to the gallantry and dash of his spearsmen, the advantages of European weapons. The officers of our forces, as usual, desired a forward policy; and the Government seemed to have been led to enter upon expeditions which had the effect of incensing the Mullah and quickening his appetite for war. If we had confined ourselves to the defensive events might have been different. That was the way the thing grew. It went on steadily growing until the expedition of last year.

Nothing could be more unfortunate than the result of the expedition of last year, when our force was surprised on approaching the Mudug oasis. That was the cause of a great deal of the difficulty, because, as was well said by Colonel Swayne, nothing in the East succeeds like success. The fact that we were defeated on that occasion had enabled the Mullah to become very much more formidable. The Committee ought to receive an explanation from the War Office as to why this expedition was allowed to proceed with what turned out to be an inadequate equipment. He thought the policy of the Government through these earlier stages might be reduced to these points. In the first place it was not clear that the Government themselves, although Lord Lansdowne wished to keep on the defensive if he could, stated and forecasted their own policy. They followed the advice of their officers instead of clinging to the policy of keeping on the defensive. In the second place, he found in the Blue-book little trace of what sort of consultation had taken place between the War Office and the Foreign Office, and one of the evils of the whole matter had been that they never knew whether it was the Foreign Office or the War Office that was responsible for the present state of affairs between the two Departments. He thought the whole matter ought to have been handed over to the War Office. So far as he could gather from the Blue-book it was the Foreign Office that had initiated the war, and not the War Office. But both the War Office and the Foreign Office seemed to have underestimated the dangers of the situation. Take one point. This was a waterless country, and it was not realised that better provision must be made for supplying the force with water than was actually made. It was not realised that a mounted force was wanted, because what the Mullah gained by being in possession of cavalry was similar to the advantage which the Boers gained in the beginning of the South African War. It was his celerity of movement that made him so formidable. He was able to escape, to cut our lines, and to scout. The difficulties we had found were very largely owing to the fact that his was an exceedingly nimble mounted force, whereas our force was largely pedestrian. He admitted that from time to time warnings on that subject were given in the reports from the officers. That was the position to which we had now been brought. He did not wish to underestimate the difficulties of the position in which the Government was placed. He wished to acknowledge candidly that they did try to adopt a defensive policy. His hon. friend who opened the debate was of opinion that the Government were wrong in not striking soon and hard. That hon. Gentleman might be right, but personally he was inclined to think a defensive policy was the best policy. But when the Government had decided to abandon a defensive policy it might have been better had they struck more quickly and harder. In his opinion, it might have been better to have struck sooner, before the Mullah's forces had been reinforced, and demoralisation had set in among our own troops.

He did not think the debate ought to close without an expression from some part of the House of the great friendliness and cordial spirit which had been shown towards us by the Government of Italy. The Government of Italy, no doubt in their own interests, but still with a disregard of pedantry, and a cordial friendliness to this country which we ought to appreciate, had allowed us to use their ports, and had co-operated with us in every way they could, short of employing forces of their own. He had several questions to ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, in regard to the concluding despatches in the Blue-book with reference to the Conference at Rome and the Memorandum in which was contained the outlines of the policy of the Government in reference to the next move forward of the Mullah; but before doing so he might refer to the loss of Colonel Plunkett. He had the honour of knowing Colonel Plunkett, and he wished to acknowledge the gallantry of that young officer of very great promise and very amiable qualities. It was in the movement contemplated by this Memorandum that this unfortunate reverse occurred in which Colonel Plunkett lost his life. It was obviously the intention to despatch a column from Obbia to the Mudug oasis in order to strike a blow at the influence of the Mullah, and to hold it. It now turned out that Obbia was a very difficult port, in fact only an open roadstead, in which to land supplies. What, then, were the intentions of the Government with regard to the future? Did they propose to operate from some other point, and did the agreement with Italy foreshadow the policy of acting with friendly tribes? Did they intend to put forward Yusuf Ali, the Sheik of Obbia, against the Mullah? If so, had they considered the difficulties, which he thought insuperable, that would arise from supporting a native chief in the Italian sphere, far from our base? And, lastly, was there any intention on the part of the Government to endeavour to get Italy to actually co-operate? His hon. friend who brought forward this question expressed his desire that if the operations must be prolonged and the country be held, it ought not to be done unless Italy co-operated. But there was no indication that he could see that Italy was disposed to take any active part in sending a force into that country, or in undertaking operations there. He did not know the attitude of Abyssinia. He understood it was friendly, but he did not find that there was any indication that Abyssinia was co-operating with us against the Mullah.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: She is co-operating.

Mr. BRYCE: She was patrolling her own frontier, but he did not think it appeared in the latest dispatches that she was co-operating. It was, however, quite clear that, considering the present operations were going on in the Italian sphere, at a great distance from the British base in the Gulf of Aden, and with waterless deserts between, the question of the co-operation of Italy became of primary importance, and the Committee was entitled to some information on the subject. So much for the specific points on which he wanted information.

There were two possible policies for the future. One policy was to keep hold of the coast and of the tribes immediately adjoining, to defend their frontiers, so far as necessary, perhaps by a line of posts, but resting upon our own base in the Gulf of Aden. We were quite able to do that. He thought in carrying out that policy everything possible should be done in the way of encouraging trade. We ought to try to give the tribes an interest in keeping the peace by means of trade, and he could not help thinking that not quite enough had been done in that direction. A great deal also might be done, by way of judicious subsidies, to get the tribes enlisted on our side. He meant the policy adopted by Colonel Warburton in subsidising the tribes in the Khyber Pass What was the alternative policy? Had the Committee considered where we stood in Somaliland, a territory stretching away backwards into deserts unknown even to the geographer, and where there was no natural boundary, where we did not know what tribes there were between the Italian sphere on the one side and the Abyssinian frontier on the other —and reaching as far as Lake Rudolf? Were we to pursue the Mullah into those trackless limits, were we to endeavour to establish posts there, to keep garrisons, and to make ourselves permanently responsible for those territories? The Government had given the House no indication of the view they took. This territory was wild, and as absolutely inhospitable as any part of the earth, and little fit for us to occupy with any hope of profit or benefit, while the expense would be exceedingly heavy. He hoped they should hear from the Government that there was no intention to do anything of the kind. At present we were left in a position of great anxiety. We had spent about a million already and had the prospect of spending a million more. While the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in calculating his Budget, had allowed himself a very narrow margin, we were left with the prospect of undertaking a costly operation, the nature of which was not foreseen, and apparently entirely off our own bat. He thought that a question involving so large issues would require further discussion. He invited the Committee to consider the gravity of the position, and he hoped the Government would give an assurance that they were going to conduct this operation with more prudence and foresight than had latterly been shown, and that they would think many times approaching the Mudug oasis. That was the cause of a great deal of the difficulty, because, as was well said by Colonel Swayne, nothing in the East succeeds like success. The fact that we were defeated on that occasion had enabled the Mullah to become very much more formidable. The Committee ought to receive an explanation from the War Office as to why this expedition was allowed to proceed with what turned out to be an inadequate equipment. He thought the policy of the Government through these earlier stages might be reduced to these points. In the first place it was not clear that the Government themselves, although Lord Lansdowne wished to keep on the defensive if he could, stated and forecasted their own policy. They followed the advice of their officers instead of clinging to the policy of keeping on the defensive. In the second place, he found in the Blue-book little trace of what sort of consultation had taken place between the War Office and the Foreign Office, and one of the evils of the whole matter had been that they never knew whether it was the Foreign Office or the War Office that was responsible for the present state of affairs between the two Departments. He thought the whole matter ought to have been handed over to the War Office. So far as he could gather from the Blue-book it was the Foreign Office that had initiated the war, and not the War Office. But both the War Office and the Foreign Office seemed to have underestimated the dangers of the situation. Take one point. This was a waterless country, and it was not realised that better provision must be made for supplying the force with water than was actually made. It was not realised that a mounted force was wanted, because what the Mullah gained by being in possession of cavalry was similar to the advantage which the Boers gained in the beginning of the South African War. It was his celerity of movement that made him so formidable. He was able to escape, to cut our lines, and to scout. The difficulties we had found were very largely owing to the fact that his was an exceedingly nimble mounted force, whereas our force was largely pedestrian. He admitted that from time to time warnings on that subject were given in the reports from the officers. That was the position to which we had now been brought. He did not wish to underestimate the difficulties of the position in which the Government was placed. He wished to acknowledge candidly that they did try to adopt a defensive policy. His hon. friend who opened the debate was of opinion that the Government were wrong in not striking soon and hard. That hon. Gentleman might be right, but personally he was inclined to think a defensive policy was the best policy. But when the Government had decided to abandon a defensive policy it might have been better had they struck more quickly and harder. In his opinion, it might have been better to have struck sooner, before the Mullah's forces had been reinforced, and demoralisation had set in among our own troops.

He did not think the debate ought to close without an expression from some part of the House of the great friendliness and cordial spirit which had been shown towards us by the Government of Italy. The Government of Italy, no doubt in their own interests, but still with a disregard of pedantry, and a cordial friendliness to this country which we ought to appreciate, had allowed us to use their ports, and had co-operated with us in every way they could, short of employing forces of their own. He had several questions to ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, in regard to the concluding despatches in the Blue-book with reference to the Conference at Rome and the Memorandum in which was contained the outlines of the policy of the Government in reference to the next move forward of the Mullah; but before doing so he might refer to the loss of Colonel Plunkett. He had the honour of knowing Colonel Plunkett, and he wished to acknowledge the gallantry of that young officer of very great promise and very amiable qualities. It was in the movement contemplated by this Memorandum that this unfortunate reverse occurred in which Colonel Plunkett lost his life. It was obviously the intention to despatch a column from Obbia to the Mudug oasis in order to strike a blow at the influence of the Mullah, and to hold it. It now turned out that Obbia was a very difficult port, in fact only an open roadstead, in which to land supplies. What, then, were the intentions of the Government with regard to the future? Did they propose to operate from some other point, and did the agreement with Italy foreshadow the policy of acting with friendly tribes? Did they intend to put forward Yusuf Ali, the Sheik of Obbia, against the Mullah? If so, had they considered the difficulties, which he thought insuperable, that would arise from supporting a native chief in the Italian sphere, far from our base? And, lastly, was there any intention on the part of the Government to endeavour to get Italy to actually co-operate? His hon. friend who brought forward this question expressed his desire that if the operations must be prolonged and the country be held, it ought not to be done unless Italy co-operated. But there was no indication that he could see that Italy was disposed to take any active part in sending a force into that country, or in undertaking operations there. He did not know the attitude of Abyssinia. He understood it was friendly, but he did not find that there was any indication that Abyssinia was co-operating with us against the Mullah.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: She is co-operating.

Mr. BRYCE: She was patrolling her own frontier, but he did not think it appeared in the latest dispatches that she was co-operating. It was, however, quite clear that, considering the present operations were going on in the Italian sphere, at a great distance from the British base in the Gulf of Aden, and with waterless deserts between, the question of the co-operation of Italy became of primary importance, and the Committee was entitled to some information on the subject. So much for the specific points on which he wanted information.

There were two possible policies for the future. One policy was to keep hold of the coast and of the tribes immediately adjoining, to defend their frontiers, so far as necessary, perhaps by a line of posts, but resting upon our own base in the Gulf of Aden. We were quite able to do that. He thought in carrying out that policy everything possible should be done in the way of encouraging trade. We ought to try to give the tribes an interest in keeping the peace by means of trade, and he could not help thinking that not quite enough had been done in that direction. A great deal also might be done, by way of judicious subsidies, to get the tribes enlisted on our side. He meant the policy adopted by Colonel Warburton in subsidising the tribes in the Khyber Pass What was the alternative policy? Had the Committee considered where we stood in Somaliland, a territory stretching away backwards into deserts unknown even to the geographer, and where there was no natural boundary, where we did not know what tribes there were between the Italian sphere on the one side and the Abyssinian frontier on the other —and reaching as far as Lake Rudolf? Were we to pursue the Mullah into those trackless limits, were we to endeavour to establish posts there, to keep garrisons, and to make ourselves permanently responsible for those territories? The Government had given the House no indication of the view they took. This territory was wild, and as absolutely inhospitable as any part of the earth, and little fit for us to occupy with any hope of profit or benefit, while the expense would be exceedingly heavy. He hoped they should hear from the Government that there was no intention to do anything of the kind. At present we were left in a position of great anxiety. We had spent about a million already and had the prospect of spending a million more. While the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in calculating his Budget, had allowed himself a very narrow margin, we were left with the prospect of undertaking a costly operation, the nature of which was not foreseen, and apparently entirely off our own bat. He thought that a question involving so large issues would require further discussion. He invited the Committee to consider the gravity of the position, and he hoped the Government would give an assurance that they were going to conduct this operation with more prudence and foresight than had latterly been shown, and that they would think many times before they undertook the great responsibility and enormous danger which the permanent occupation of these territories must necessarily involve.

* THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The right hon. Gentleman in his concluding sentences drew attention to the probability that further discussion on this subject would be necessary. I do not think that anybody can complain of the tone of the debate this afternoon. The discussion, so far as it has proceeded, has gone far to clear away a good many misconceptions, both as to the operations which have been undertaken, and the objects which the Government had in view in undertaking these operations. In the first place, I do not think that the speech of my noble friend has in any serious way been challenged with regard to the account he has given of the manner in which we were forced into these operations, which we would have gladly avoided. It must be remembered that the treaties made with the friendly tribes were made, not by this Government, but by preceding Governments, which had excellent reasons for undertaking the liabilities they did accept. My noble friend showed, step by step, the circumstances which, while the Government were not responsible for them, made it necessary to exercise protection over the tribes whom we had undertaken to defend. Criticisms, indeed, there have been from various quarters. The hon. Member for Bristol thought we did not strike soon enough; and the hon. Member for the Dumfries Burghs thought we had struck too soon, and he endeavoured to show from the Bluebook that the challenge was sent to the Mullah earlier than was necessary. But I think these criticisms answer one another. The fact remains that the tribes under our protection suffered very seriously before any steps were taken by the Consul-General at all, that they were losing their property and their wives, and had been personally maltreated at the hands of the Mullah.

SIR ROBERT REID: It was only after the declaration of the military parade.

* MR. BRODRICK: The right hon. Member has confused two things. If we were to accept a challenge from a European Power, definite acts of war would probably follow almost instantaneously; but, if we reduce the language of the Acting Consul-General, the acts reported on 14th September do not by any means follow on his proclamation of 10th September. On the contrary, they were a recapitulation on his part of information which did not travel so rapidly as is the case with information in the daily paper. It was information of outrages which had been proceeding, not only a few days before, but weeks before. I only make that point for this reason. I can speak with some personal knowledge of negotiations of that kind. I have been Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and no man ever sat in the Foreign Office who was more absolutely determined to keep the country, if he could, out of these small expeditions than Lord Salisbury. That was not a unique case, for a case arose in East Africa at the same time—a case of planting a line of posts—which Lord Salisbury thought might lead to trouble. The case of Somaliland was the second. There was a similar case further south. And in all these cases Lord Salisbury set his face determinedly against anything which would make it necessary to adopt a punitive expedition. I am sure it was a sentiment shared by the whole of the Government. If the sentiment would be shared in the present day, how much more would it be shared at a moment when we had undertaken great liabilities in a war in South Africa? I think, therefore, that, as regards the inception of this expedition, we may consider that we are on common ground with all our critics. Something has been said by the right hon. Gentleman as regards the manner in which it has been carried out. I was a little surprised to hear him ask the Government to explain why there was not a better provision of men, artillery, forage, and supplies. I think the question only shows that the information which has already reached us and the country, is insufficient to enable Members to judge what is the force provided by the Government. I have received violent letters in the course of the past few days, complaining that our force is inferior to that of the Mullah, and that we should

put a larger number of men—the right hon. Gentleman said a larger number of mounted men on the field.

MR. BRYCE: My question referred to the former expedition.

*MR. BRODRICK: I am glad the right hon. Gentleman was not referring to the present expedition. All I can say is that Colonel Swayne conceived that, with the force which was at his disposal, he was justified in making the advance he did. He has most gallantly carried out the duties which were laid upon him, considering the force he had under him; and the misfortune which has happened to him is one of those checks which in savage warfare and in a wooded country, with the difficulties of water and transport, may happen and must be risked in any such attempt. Perhaps I may clear that point away by saying that we were anxious, with regard to this expedition, to send as large a force, as fully and plentifully equipped in every respect, as it could possibly be useful to employ, to carry out on the true basis adopted the objects in view. I believe that we fully met General Manning's requirements in every particular. The time has not come for us to have a report on the expedition from General Manning. All I can say is that any demand which has been made upon us has been promptly executed. As regards his own opinion, I may say that I have seen a private letter only a few days ago, in which he expressed the hope that the Mullah will find his force too strong for him. In another paragraph he said—

> "We must endeavour to bring the Mullah to book, and with this splendid force I think we shall be able to."

I imagine that General Manning had nothing to complain of in the provision made in respect of his force. It is obvious that in an advance of that description, made through such a country, entirely dependent on camels for transport—and these Somaliland camels, other camels being unsuitable for the work in the country—in having to proceed over large stretches of desert between the wells, we are tremendously handicapped in sending as large a force as we desire.

Complaint has been made as to the bullet. We have no information, nor had we any sort of communication on the subject, until the telegram coming, not from General Manning but from Colonel Cobbe, with regard to that retirement of his in which his square was attacked. The case was carefully considered. It must not, however, be assumed that the whole of the ammunition consists of the bullet referred to; we had also a certain number of troops armed with Martini-Henry rifles; and until I heard the hon. Member I was not aware that the Martini-Henry bullet had not been considered sufficient as against savage troops. Generally speaking, the stopping power of the bullet has been recognised as sufficient. With regard to the other bullet, we wait from General Manning confirmation of this report. I telegraphed at once to know what his opinion was, and whether he had heard of any such complaint in other attacks which have been made It is a difficult and thorny subject. I agree to a large extent with the hon. Member for Fareham. You are bound to have a bullet of sufficient stopping power to prevent the rush of savages. That is, I think, clear. But it can be achieved without any of the terrors which the hon. Member for East Mayo fears. A very simple operation on the bullet of cutting off the end has that effect without producing the result which has been mentioned. A subject of this kind, however, will have our most earnest attention as soon as we have the facts before us. But hon. Members must not forget that if the facts as telegraphed are true, a force of 200 succeeded in laying low at least 2,000 assailants, and it must be evident, therefore, that the failure of the bullet cannot have been so complete. No serious attempt has been made to prove that the equipment of the force has been defective; so I am sure that no hon. Member will hesitate to agree that General Manning's progress, the difficulties which he has already surmounted, and the manner in which he has advanced during the three months he has been engaged, call for nothing but the warmest commendation from this House.

We come now to what has been achieved, and what is to be the policy. I must here say a word with regard to the attitude of the Government of Italy.

One of our critics rather assumed that we were endeavouring to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the Italians, and that we were not having sufficient regard to British interests. That is not the case at all. We appreciate to the full the cordial co-operation we have received from the Government of Italy. As far as assisting us to check the supply of ammunition to the Mullah, in sending officers to accompany our forces, in making things easy in every respect they could at Obbia, we have had full assistance from them. But it is necessary for me to say that we have not received all the assistance from Italy we had hoped or had reason to anticipate, in relation to Mudug since we have occupied it. No doubt there have been difficulties which have subsequently arisen, and which the Italian Government were unable to foresee; and we make no criticism whatever on the action of the Italian Government, which has been throughout of the friendliest character. I daresay that the map is in the minds of hon. Members, but the facts which we had to face originally were the Mullah's position. If we attacked from the north, as before, he would probably retire on the oasis of Mudug, and it would be much more difficult for us to attack from the north than for him to defend. We would drive him not merely into Italian territory but south and west into our own territory in East Africa. This was a contingency which would possibly spread the fanatical revolt and make it a bad business for us to undertake. Therefore, on the consideration simply of the strategical position, as in other respects with regard to the operations, there has been the most complete co-operation between the War Office and the Foreign Office. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the Foreign Office was doing a little filibustering on its own account without having sufficient regard to the military authorities. So long as the Foreign Office conducted the business they conferred continually with our Intelligence Department, and we have to take the fullest responsibility for all that took place. When the matter assumed a more serious character and the War Office took it over, we kept in close touch with the Foreign Office on account of so many political considerations being involved. It became necessary to make an advance from Obbia on strategical grounds. The object was to strike a blow at the prestige of the Mullah by driving him from his base at Mudug. In doing that the desire was to drive him, not to the south and west, but to the north and the east. That object was fully accomplished. The Mullah was unable to proceed to the south, and was driven to the north, in close proximity to the Abyssinian frontier. The next step was the closing up of our forces from the north. That also was accomplished by Colonel Gough. The question then arose whether a similar column could drive the Mullah nearer to the Abyssinian frontier; and that was accomplished by the advance to Gumbarru; and not only has more been accomplished by General Manning than was contemplated at the outset, but the Mullah's position at present is more unfavourable to himself than we could have hoped for from a campaign which could not with any certainty be expected to end in his capture. Then came the advance to Galadi. In that case I think that Colonel Plunkett was probably carried too far by his eagerness to attack the enemy. I agree with the tribute paid by the right hon. Gentleman to Colonel Plunkett. As far as we can tell, the force he commanded behaved with great gallantry and did everything that lay in their power when they were engaged by the enemy. But it is fair to General Manning to say that the further advance of Colonel Plunkett was not part of his scheme, and was undertaken by Colonel Plunkett on his own responsibility; and therefore that check must not be held to have influenced in any degree the operations which General Manning had undertaken. He is at Galadi, far in advance of the position we expected him to occupy. Colonel Gough is at Bohotle, and we are in communication with the Abyssinians, who are advancing from the west and south. I do not prophesy how far the co-operation of these bodies may lead to the desired results. I have telegraphed to General Manning to ask what he considers to be the estimate of the position; and until I receive that estimate I am sure the Committee will absolve me from any statement as to what the immediate military operations must be.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Could the right hon. Gentleman say where General Manning is at present? The right hon. Gentleman has telegraphed to him, therefore he must know.

*MR. BRODRICK: We believe him to be at Galadi. But while I cannot tell what the next military steps will be, I should like to clear away the impression that we are bound to hold on to Mudug by any agreement with the Italian Government. We have cleared the Mullah out of Mudug, and have operated from that base for our own benefit. If the Italians are prepared to keep the place they may; but our responsibility for Mudug in the Italian territory is entirely confined to any advantage which our own commanders may think they derive strategically from its further occupation. It is open to General Manning to retire to Bohotle, and to establish there a chain of posts. He may wish to advance further to co-operate with the Abyssinians; but in either case we shall hear before any steps are taken; and it is impossible for me to suggest what will be the immediate course. The right hon. Gentleman has expressed the hope, in which he will have the heartiest sympathy of the Government, that we shall not pursue the Mullah into trackless deserts; that we shall not set up a line of posts and garrisons in the desert, or occupy that part of the country in which this war is for the moment being carried on. The right hon. Gentleman may make his mind easy in that respect. We have no intention of administering the country in which we now are, or, as far as I can predict, of attempting to hold the country. Our policy is to keep the coast line and to maintain our protection of the tribes whom by treaty we are bound to protect; we shall certainly try to keep in hand the traffic in arms and ammunition which leads to these disturbances. We shall also take any steps in our power by means of the expedition now in progress to break the power of the Mullah, so as to prevent fresh attacks on our tribes. But we are not going to send a large fresh expedition to pursue the Mullah, to whom we have dealt a heavy blow by seizing his base, and by seizing a large amount of his cattle. We are also not prepared to operate further in the Italian territory, though we recognise the assistance which we have received from the Italian Government. It is suggested that we selected the wrong base, and that that has led to a loss of stores and ships. That is not confirmed in any way. We have knowledge only of two or three boats staved in, and the loss of a pinnace. We selected Obbia because we proposed to disembark our troops before the monsoon. We had no intention of re-embarking them after, nor would the Italian Government have desired that we should occupy their territory for a longer period. General Manning has carried out, as can be judged by the language used by the Italian Government last December, the intentions with which the expedition started. He, Colonel Gough, and the Abyssinian army, stand in a favourable position for completing what has been begun. We do not propose to incur further heavy expenditure in pushing up fresh troops, though we may have to send reinforcements to enable General Manning to hold the position. We do not propose to administer the country which we now occupy; and it is not proposed to set up posts, unless they be of a defensive character, close to our own boundaries, and for the protection of the tribes within our own boundaries. These expeditions are undoubtedly onerous ones to be undertaken by this country, but the Government to be blamed is not the Government which undertakes them in pursuance of undoubted treaty obligations, but the Government which entered into those obligations. In this case we shall find that the occupation of Berbera and the undertakings given in respect of it can be justified, but it has been necessary for us to carry out those obligations and that has been an onerous charge which we have deferred as long as we possibly could. Having undertaken the task, we have given the best support to our troops, and have every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which those on the spot have carried out the work committed to them.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): I hope that the right hon. Gentleman has not taken too optimistic a view of the future, for we should all be glad to share his view. But I rise to express my satisfaction with the assurances with which the right hon. Gentleman concluded his speech. It is perfectly true that the undertakings deliberately given by this country to the savage or semi-savage tribes under our protection must be rigidly, honourably, and even scrupulously observed, and it is immaterial what Government is in office at the time. As far as that goes our policy is a continuous policy. But I am also sure that we are all very anxious not to extend the boundary of these obligations in this particular quarter. From the point of view of Imperial safety and prestige, and from the point of view of trade, anything more undesirable than enlarging our already onerous and thankless responsibilities I cannot possibly conceive. Therefore I hail the right hon. Gentleman's statement on behalf of the Government that there is no intention of pursuing these operations beyond the boundaries of our own spheres of interest, but that there is the strongest disinclination to undertake the task of administering this country or of permanently occupying it. I am also glad to hear that, as far as the Italian sphere is concerned, we have undertaken no obligation at all. The Italian Government has shown much cordiality and friendliness all through, but I cannot help feeling that our common interests there, such as they are, were very evenly shared between the two parties, and that it is hardly a fair apportionment of the risk and responsibility that we have been compelled to undertake. As regards the future I only venture to say that, having studied these Papers carefully, I have come to the conclusion, which I think must be shared by all those who have looked into the matter, that, if you want to get rid of the formidable character of the Mullah as a possible source of danger in this part of the world, much the best way is to starve him out of his supply of arms. I cannot help thinking that if the policy of rigidly watching the ports and the whole coast, and policing them, had been adopted and pursued with vigour earlier than it was, the power of the Mullah would never have risen to the formidable dimensions which it has since assumed. It is in that direction, far more, I think, than by pushing punitive expeditions into distant parts of the country, that the prevention of the recrudescence of his power is to be looked for. But that, after all, is a comparatively subordinate matter. My whole purpose is to acknowledge the statement which the right hon. Gentleman has made that, so far as the intentions of the Government are concerned, they are rigidly to confine themselves to existing obligations, and not to extend or enlarge them in any way.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs), while rejoicing that the Government did not propose to proceed with this unfortunate enterprise, thought the Committee were invited by the declaration of the Secretary of State for War to consider why the Government had adopted the course they had been following for the last two or three years in these territories. The right hon. Gentleman said that in this last expedition they had accomplished more than they had anticipated. That was an extraordinary declaration. We had sustained a severe reverse, retreated 122 miles, and abandoned our stores; and yet the Government had accomplished more than they had anticipated. This was really trifling with Parliament.

MR. BRODRICK: I think the hon. Gentleman did not understand. What I referred to was that we had undertaken to turn the Mullah out of his base at Mudug. That we did, with the whole of his force, and ourselves occupied Mudug. We sent a flying column in pursuit, and that flying column penetrated a great deal further than it was supposed it would do, having regard to the route it had to traverse.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE was aware that it had penetrated, but it had had to retreat, carrying its wounded 122 miles. How was that an accomplishment of the object it had in view? There had been three expeditions, and the Mullah was stronger than ever. He started with 2,000 spearmen; after the second expedition he had 12,000, now he had at least 30,000 or 40,000; he had increased his prestige; we were in retreat before him, and the Government now declared they were giving up the job because they had accomplished more than was ever anticipated. Why did not the Government have the courage to state the facts? The truth was they made a mistake—not for the first time; they twice repeated the mistake, and then at last, having landed the country in disaster, they had discovered their mistake, and very sensibly were giving up the job. Some of the right hon. Gentleman's phrases had a familiar sound. The Government had heard that the Mullah "would not fight," or that he was "getting tired of it," that "every demand made by the General on the spot had been more than met," these were the phrases Members have heard for three years past. Even the statistics had the same old sound, "2000 killed!" It reminded them of the figures showing that more Boers had been killed than were ever in the field. The Mullah and his forces had been annihilated, and yet he now had ten times the number of men with which he started. The War Office had really learnt nothing. But he confessed that, when it was stated the War Office was co-operating with the Foreign Office, it was with a sense of relief he heard the expedition was to be abandoned. One Department was bad enough, but, with the combined inefficiency of both, not even the co-operation of Italy could save us. The Government had been timid where they ought to have been bold, just as in South Africa they were rash where they ought to have been cautious. They might have done one of two things—either remained on the defensive and protected the tribesmen to whom they had pledged their word, or gone forward and smashed the Mullah. They had done neither. The story was perfectly simple. Here was a Mullah supposed to be mad. If the Mullah was mad what was the War Office? It would really be interesting to have the Mullah's opinion of both the War Office and the Foreign Office. This mad gentleman started, with 2,000 men, fighting the presumably sane Department which administered our affairs in Somaliland. The sane Department at home sent an inefficient force to meet him, and they retreated "having accomplished their object," which presumably was to treble the Mullah's forces. Then, according to the dispatch of 17th March, 1902, the Government discovered that the Mullah had 12,000 men; they allowed him to raid Dolbohanti, where he added another 12,000 men to his forces. Against these 24,000 soldiers, mostly mounted, they sent a number of unmounted men—the same old story! But they sent only 2,000 African levies to overcome this really clever "madman" with a force of 24,000 first-class fighting men, whose only object in life, according to the hon. Member for Fareham, was to be killed. Naturally! That force was beaten—but "they had accomplished their object." Having had these two lessons, the War Office sent another force, not of 2,000 but actually 2,300 men. Who would say, after that, that the War Office did not profit by experience? It was true the Mullah had added 30,000 to his force, but the War Office would not look at that. Then came disaster. But the War Office said their object had been accomplished! They had cleared out of the whole territory; the Mullah was broken; he was chasing our troops; and the right hon. Gentleman did not know where his own General was.

*MR. BRODRICK: I am afraid I cannot enter into the hon. Gentleman's merriment on the subject. When I was asked where the General was, I said he was in Galadi.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE understood that the right hon. Gentleman added "or somewhere near." That made a great difference. He was glad to hear he had got back to Galadi. At all events, he was in full retreat, and had abandoned his most bulky stores. After two or three years of fighting, with disaster after disaster, the War Office, aided by the intelligence of the Foreign Office, said they were going to abandon the whole thing simply because the object was accomplished. That was trifling with the House of Commons.

*MR. BRODRICK: I made no announcement of that kind at all. I very carefully guarded myself against saying what military steps would now be taken until we heard from General Manning. What I said was that the object of the expedition—to expel the Mullah from Mudug—had been accomplished, and it was not supposed that he would operate further in that sphere. Our future policy will depend on the advice we receive from General Manning.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the Mullah had left Mudug to pursue them, and the Government said they had accomplished their object in getting him out of Mudug. They were fighting a gentleman whom they called mad. He should not have thought it possible that two Government Departments would have shown such hopeless inefficiency and incompetency as was shown at the present moment. The Secretary of State for War said he did not know now what he was going to do, and all he was clear about was that he was not going to Mudug again. He talked as if nothing had happened, and he said he deprecated disasters. Was the slaughter of some of the most gallant officers in the British Army a disaster? Was the slaughter of 150 to 200 soldiers to be called a disaster? Here was one of the best officers in the British Army, one of the pluckiest, who knew the country—his life and that of other gallant men had been sacrificed through the sheer stupidity of a couple of Government Departments. Whatever one's opinion might be about the South African War, everybody knew that there was in that war more bloodshed than was necessary, owing to the incompetency of one of those Departments. Was it not time that this House should at least make some one responsible for all this muddle and disaster which was perpetrated in the name of the Empire?

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 233. (Division List No. 72.)

AYES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter(*Lanark*)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson,Dr.CharlesFredk.
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Lawson,Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan,J.Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Mara, James
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Reid,SirR.Threshie(*Dumfries*)
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glam., E.*)
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, O. (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)
Woodhouse,SirJT(*Hudd'rsfi'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr Charles Hobhouse and Sir Joseph Leese.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,RtHonSirH.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James

Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles,T.Gibson (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish,V.C.W.(*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig,CharlesCurtis(*Antrim,S.*
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R.(*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.SirJosephC.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington,Rt.Hn.Sir John E.
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson,Rt Hn.Sir J.(*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald,Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(*Warwick,S.W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs,HnA.G.H(*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon,Maj Evans (*Tr. Hmlts*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent,Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence,Sir Joseph(*Monm'th*
Lawson,JohnGrant(*Yorks,NR*
Lee,ArthurH.(*Hants,Fareham*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col.CharlesW.(*Evesham*
Long,Rt Hn.Walter(*Bristol,S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver,SirLewis(*EdinburghW*
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Malcolm, Ian
Middlemore, Jn.Throgmorton
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More,Robt.Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Murray,RtHnA Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (*Liverpool*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Saml. Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(*IsleofWight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W.Bromwich*)
Stanley,Hn.Arthur(*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(*Oxf'dUniv*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond. Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.ACE(*Taunton*
Whiteley,H(*Ashton-und-Lyne*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams,RtHnJPowell-(*Birm*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Wilson,A. Stanley(*York,E.R.*
Wilson John (*Glasgow*)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R.(*Bath*)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley,Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong
Younger, William

Tellers for the Noes—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,267,500, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the collection of the Post Office Revenue."

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): It has not been customary in recent years for the Minister in charge of this Vote to preface the discussion by a statement with relation to matters committed to his charge, but, in recent years, at any rate, the Postmaster-General has been in another place and has not been able to speak for himself. There are one or two matters upon which I should like to address the Committee before the general discussion begins, and which I think will be of general interest to the Committee. They refer, in part, to some of the reforms or changes to which Members have drawn my attention since I have held my present office, and they relate, in part, to those grievances, or alleged grievances, of the staff which makes such demands upon the time and attention, and, I hope I may be permitted to say, the patience of the Postmaster-General. A great many proposals are made from all quarters for changes or reforms, which the writers think would be of great benefit to the public, but the cost of which to the taxpayer they too lightly pass over, and the Postmaster-General, in considering these, has to hold the balance fairly between the convenience he can extend to the public and the demand he may make upon the public purse.

Even before I went to the Post Office, and while I was Secretary to the Treasury, my hon. friend the Member for Devizes Division of Wiltshire drew my attention to one matter in regard to which he thought, by a small change, the Post Office could confer considerable benefit, especially on the poorer classes of the community. He drew my attention to the fact that when a person wanted a Postal Order for many sums below one pound, owing to the absence of a Postal Order for that denomination, he was obliged to buy two orders and pay two commissions for the orders for the sum he required, and that very often he was obliged to pay a higher commission for a given sum than he would be obliged to pay for a higher sum which happened to have an order representing it. I have given a good deal of attention to this matter. I found that to increase the number of Postal Order denominations so that there might be one representing every sixpence, beginning with sixpence and ending with one pound, would involve considerable increase of cost in printing and in staff to manipulate this increased number of orders, and in other ways; but I found also that when a double order was required to make up a sum, it was nearly always composed of a penny order and a halfpenny order. When you consider the cost of handling, issuing, and paying it, the halfpenny order is issued at a loss—at almost exactly the same loss that a penny order brings in profit. The cost of these orders, therefore, is $\frac{3}{4}$d. to the Department from their birth until they are finally done with, and thus, in each of these cases where it was necessary that two orders should be purchased, the profit made on the one was consumed by the loss made on the other. I am glad to be able to say that I have also been successful in making such arrangements with the Bank of England for a reduced price of printing these orders as will wholly compensate the increased cost of issuing and dealing with them. Accordingly, I propose to introduce, as soon as the orders can be got ready, a complete set of forty orders for amounts from 6d. to 20s., which will be purchaseable by the public at the present rates—under 2s., a $\frac{1}{2}$d., and above that sum 1d., or of the higher sum now paid. I shall not be able to bring this scheme completely into operation until the 1st of January next year, but the first of these orders—those for the lower sums—will be brought into use on the 1st of July of the current year. I should add that these new orders will have a counterfoil, numbered with the same number as the postal order, and a blank space for the purchaser to fill in on the counterfoil the name of the person to whom, and the post office at which, the order itself is payable; and I hope when these securities will be given, I may rely upon the assistance of the public in making fraud difficult by the filling up of every postal order before they send it off. In considering these questions, my hon. friend the Member for Devizes brought to my notice the cost the present arrangements had thrown on the members of friendly societies throughout the United Kingdom, many of whom pay their subscriptions, and many of whom receive their benefit, by means of postal orders. I should like to acknowledge the advice and assistance I received from members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Friendly Societies to whom I applied for help in this matter. I believe that while every user of postal orders will effect a saving, not only of expense and annoyance, no section of the community will feel the change more valuable than the members of our great friendly societies.

Another change which, with the sanction of the Treasury, I am now in course of carrying out, is one which is less easy to describe in definite terms, but it is the more generous treatment of the smaller country places, especially in regard to the allowance of a second post. The Committee will bear in mind that, since the Jubilee concession in postal matters, much greater facilities have been given than were given before. I think the time has come for some further move forward in this respect, and, though I do not wish to raise any hope which necessarily will be disappointed, and though I do not pretend for a moment that I can grant anything like all the applications made, still I hope to be able to deal more generously than has been the practice in the past with regard to those appeals for a second post in rural districts.

Two other trifling changes, which I should like to take this opportunity of announcing, though they more properly belong to the Telegraph Vote, perhaps, you will allow me to mention them now. In the first place, my attention has been called to the fact that the Post Office charges 2d. for a receipt for money paid for a telegram. I do not think it is desirable to encourage everyone to demand a receipt on the payment of their telegrams. It would very much hamper business if there was a crowd at the counters, and it would delay sending away rather than facilitate the work. But there are cases where a person wants a receipt for one reason or another, and I can see no reason why it should be 2d., and I have decided, with the consent of the Treasury, to reduce it to 1d. Lastly, there is a small point to which my attention was called by my hon. friend the Member for Canterbury, who is also active in postal reforms, and that is in regard to the sending of a re-directed telegram by post after it has been delivered at the proper address and when the addressee is not there. The Committee are aware that a penny letter sent to any man's house can, if that man is absent on holiday, be re-directed and posted without any fresh charge. I am not prepared to allow a telegram to be re-directed as a telegram without repayment of the telegraph fee, but I see no reason why, in the case of a telegram on which 6d. has been paid, any further charge should be made when re-directed as a letter, and as soon as the new regulation comes into force it will be accepted re-addressed for transmission by post without a stamp. [An Hon. Member: After it has been opened?] Of course not—if it has not been opened; but is forwarded in the state in which it is delivered it may be re-directed like a letter in similar circumstances without fresh payment. These are all in the nature of concessions to the public; but in connection with the extension of the postal order system, there is a restriction which I propose to make, and in which I trust I shall be supported by this Committee and the public at large. Hitherto no postal order has been obtainable for any sum under 1s. It will now be possible to obtain a postal order when these regulations come into force for so small a sum as 6d. That is not profitable business for the Department. It is done entirely for the convenience of the public, but I think, in bringing that into force, I shall be justified in placing a further restriction on the re-purchase from the public of stamps across the counter. It is the custom to make in stamps remittances of sums under 1s., in reply to advertisements in papers, and as long as there was no postal order by which these sums could be made up, it was hardly possible to refuse to allow stamps to be sent in payment and to make payment for the stamps across the counter when they are tendered. At the same time there have been great complaints, from magistrates sometimes, of the temptation to fraud which the practice places in the way, especially of boys and young people with comparatively low rates of wages employed in offices. They are tempted to pilfer stamps and take them to the post office, and obtain money in return. That leads to what, I regret to say, is the most frequent form of fraud amongst the Post Office officials, but which, I am happy to say, is rare proportionally to the number of employees. It undoubtedly places temptation in their way. Many cases have come under my own notice, and still more under the notice of my advisers. I therefore propose that from the 1st January next the repurchase of stamps across the counter by the Post Office should only be made under the following conditions: Any person tendering such stamps for purchase should fill in a form stating his name and address and the value of the stamps; he will not be paid on the spot; but the money will be remitted to him at his address by money order. The commission charged to the public will be increased from 2½ per cent. to 5 per cent. in order to cover the cost of the postal order. The very smallest amount of stamps that will be purchased is £1. I think, if I am supported, as I hope I will be, when this sixpenny order is in force, and that regulation comes into operation, they will do much to diminish the temptations to fraud which are offered, both to those inside and outside the Post Office.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is there any restriction at present on the amount of stamps that may be repurchased?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There may be a minimum, but I really could not at the moment say what the smallest amount of stamps that may be accepted is. There are other subjects of postal administration and reform, affecting large sections of the public and exciting great interest, on which I would have been glad of this opportunity to make a statement, but I think that, having regard to the time at which we have now arrived, I must postpone that to some other occasion. I proceed at once to deal with another class of questions which have come under my notice. Of course, I have had before me a demand for an investigation into the grievances of the Post Office staff. That has been made on previous occasions, and reiterated from year to year. The demand is that a Select Committee of this House should be appointed to examine into their grievances. I have made it my business since I have been at the Post Office to see that every memorial from the staff dealing with their grievances, addressed to me, should come before me personally, and that whatever reply was sent should be one that I personally, not merely officially, approved of, and was responsible for. Even though I have felt that many of the matters thus brought to my notice were very small details of administration, I am determined that an official of the Post Office, going to the head of his service, should receive as fair and careful consideration of his appeal, if he applies to me direct, as if he sought Parliamentary influence to urge his claim. And I venture to think that nothing has occurred during the time I have been responsible which can justify any servant of the Post Office in saying that he is unable, except by Parliamentary influence, or by Parliamentary exposure, to obtain the attention of the head of the Department. Of course, under these circumstances, I have had to examine into the details of a great number of grievances alleged by the staff, and I have received many deputations which have addressed me personally, in addition to the countless written statements which they have submitted to me.

The other day, at the request of several Members on both sides of the House, I met the Members themselves, and consented that, if they wished, they should be accompanied by members of the staff, who should make before them, and in my presence, a statement of the grounds on which they asked for this Parliamentary inquiry, in order that then and there I might discuss it with my hon. friends. The statement was a long one; we were interrupted by a division, half-past seven had very nearly arrived, and it was not convenient for the Members to further discuss the matter at that moment. Accordingly I was asked by them to draw up a written statement on that subject, which is very nearly ready, and I intend to send it to each one of them. The Vote comes on to-night, and I intend to take this opportunity of making a few observations on the grounds for this Parliamentary inquiry as put forth by the staff. There are three main grounds alleged by the spokesman for the staff for a Parliamentary inquiry—wages, sanitation, and meal reliefs, or the time allowed out of working hours for taking refreshment. As regards all of these subjects, I must remind the Committee again that they were the subject of very full and careful inquiry by what is known as the Tweedmouth Committee. I am aware that the Members of the staff were disappointed at the composition of that Committee and have expressed an opinion, shared by some hon Members, that its composition was not of a character likely to secure absolute acceptance of its decision. I think that the staff might have protested in that respect before they found that the report was not wholly in their favour. Whatever may be said as to one gentleman who might be supposed to be too closely connected with the Post Office Administration to be without prejudice, nothing can be urged against the other three; Lord Tweedmouth, who was a member of the Cabinet and Lord Privy Seal, and Sir Arthur Gordon, who was Permanent Secretary of the India Office, not connected with the Home Civil Service at all, and not connected in any way with the Post Office or with the Treasury Administration. The last member of the Committee was Sir Llewellyn Smith, of the Board of Trade, who by his special training was peculiarly qualified to express an opinion on the matters submitted to the investigation of the Committee. The Committee had many sittings; they gave the most careful attention to the grievances which were urged on their attention by the Post Office witnesses, and while they made a report which proposed many concessions and improvements in the conditions of the Post Office work, that report was adopted and accepted *en bloc* by the Postmaster-General of the time. And not only was it accepted as it stood, but within a year—or at least a very short time—its recommendations were further received by the then Postmaster-General, the Duke of Norfolk, and by Mr. Hanbury, Secretary to the Treasury. Further concessions were made and the total cost of these concessions, made under these two inquiries, to the taxpayers was something like £600,000 a year.

I wish to say at once that, in my opinion, at the time these recommendations were made and accepted they were a really fair and even generous settlement of the questions which were considered. I would not be thought to cast any kind of discredit on the recommendations of that Committee, and would not have it supposed that I attach otherwise than the highest value to them. I think we were greatly indebted to the gentlemen who gave so much time and attention to the solution of these questions. Of course it is the case that with every year elapsing since that inquiry circumstances change more and more, and it does not necessarily follow that what was fair and right then is in all respects fair and right now. I myself have come to the conclusion, after examining the many questions brought before me from time to time, that while a great number of the complaints made have no foundation in justice, and that a great many of the men who think themselves aggrieved would find it difficult to get, elsewhere than in the public service, such good employment as they have now, there are other cases which are open to improvement and for which further inquiry is needed to fix exactly what should be done. I have on two occasions, speaking on behalf of the then Postmaster General in this House, stated that I hold as strongly as I ever have done that a House of Commons Committee is not a body for such an inquiry. No one can have a higher respect than I have for this

House or its reputation, and for the spirit which leads so many gentlemen to give up so much time to public work, and it is, therefore, with no disrespect for the House or its Committees that I repeat for myself and for my colleagues that we are unalterably opposed to anything in the nature of a Select Committee of the House of Commons for the decision of this question. Hon. Members know, and it is no use blinking it, the kind of pressure which is brought to bear, or is attempted to be brought to bear, upon Members in all parts of the House by the public servants, servants of the Post Office I am afraid especially, though not entirely, at election time. I have had Members come to me, not from one side of the House alone, to seek from me, in my position as Postmaster-General, protection for them in the discharge of their public duties against the pressure sought to be put upon them by the employees of the Post Office. Even if the machinery by which our Select Committees are appointed were such as would enable us to secure a Select Committee composed of thoroughly impartial men who had committed themselves by no expressions of opinion on one side or the other, I still think that it would not be fair to pick out fifteen Members of this House and make them marked men for the purposes of such pressure as is now distributed more or less over the whole Assembly.

But if I am opposed to the appointment of a House of Commons Committee for fixing wages in the Post Office, I am still more opposed to thrusting upon it, or, indeed, on any Committee, the duty of regulating in all its details the daily administration and work of the Post Office. The two main points which were brought before the Committee upstairs in support of the demand for an inquiry were sanitation and meal relief. It was contended that certain post offices, owing to a broken staff, necessitated by broken business, became over-crowded, ill-ventilated, and otherwise insanitary. Of course it must happen from time to time that the staff will exceed the capacity of a building, and that the Department has to look out for a new one, but no one who knows the difficulty the Government has to contend with as a purchaser or renter of property when it is known that the Government is in the market will be surprised if there is sometimes an unavoidable delay extending over a greater period than, to members of the staff not cognisant of the difficulties, appears reasonable. But how can a House of Commons Committee, or any temporary Committee, examine into the sanitary condition of every Post Office building throughout the country which the staff thinks not to be in a good condition? Two specific instances have been given to me of offices which were said to be in an unfit condition—Swansea and Grimsby. At Swansea the new head office was opened in April of last year, and the old office continued to be used merely as a branch sub-office, with a greatly reduced staff, until new premises could be found. It was only a week or two ago that I had papers before me with proposals for a new site, but they did not appear to me to offer proper accommodation for the staff, and I was obliged to direct that some other scheme should be devised. At Grimsby we are in negotiation for, and I hope we will soon purchase, a site for a new telegraph office. The existing one consists of four houses thrown together, not a very convenient arrangement, although I am pleased to say not an insanitary arrangement. As this is a typical instance of statements submitted to me, I will read the report, dated June 6, 1902, of a local medical practitioner who is the medical officer to the Post Office and also certifying surgeon under the Factory Acts. He says that after a very careful examination there was no objection of any kind on sanitary grounds, and that it appeared to him that great pains had been taken to render the office sanitary. The rooms were clean, the air was abundant, and no illness, as far as he knew, could be attributed to the sanitation of the building, and that is a typical case. After all, the real test is the amount of sick leave taken by the staff. Let it be borne in mind that a member of the established staff, if provided with a proper medical certificate, receives full pay up to as much as six months' sick leave; and that a member of the unestablished staff receives something less than full pay. I ask the Committee to bear that distinction in mind while I give the statistics. The average sick leave for 1901 was—for men on the established staff, 7·6 days per annum; and for men on the unestablished staff, 5·2 days; while for women on the established staff it was 12·1, and for women on the unestablished staff it was 8·4. It will be found that these numbers are below the normal for similar classes throughout the country, and at any rate I am quite confident that they will not support any charge that the Post Office buildings are generally in an insanitary condition. Cases will arise from time to time in which buildings become out of date and overcrowded through the growth of work, but all such cases must be dealt with on their merits, and if the Postmaster-General and his staff, with the assistance of the officers of the Board of Works, and, if necessary, of the factory inspectors, whose services we can obtain through the Home Office, are not competent to look into these matters they are not fitted to hold the positions to which they have been appointed.

Lastly, there is the question of meal relief, which is intimately connected with the arrangement of the hours of work. The work of the Post Office servant lasts for eight hours, and if he does eight hours' continuous duty he is allowed half-an-hour out of that time for a meal, reducing his actual working time to seven-and-a-half hours. But the work of the Post Office is peculiar. The Department has practically no control over the time at which it comes. It has to be taken whenever the public bring it, and when they bring it they expect it to be dealt with at once. Therefore, it is not possible, in spreading the work evenly over the twenty-four hours, as is comparatively simple in many manufacturing and distributing businesses, to divide it up into continuous hours duty. Accordingly there are a certain number of split duties in which the eight hours' work is divided between two attendances; and it is chiefly in connection with this that the grievance as to meal relief is alleged. I have had one or two cases brought before me which I thought not satisfactory, and whenever a grievance, in my judgment, has been proved, I have tried, or am trying, to devise a remedy. I am not going to trouble the Committee with many more details. There are over 150,000 persons constantly employed by the Post Office, and, although this House can do many things, it cannot lay down rules as to the working hours of such a vast number employed in varying circumstances. I only wish to draw the attention of the Committee to what was described to me as a typical grievance by the spokesman of a deputation which waited on me shortly before Christmas. It is the case of certain sorting clerks and telegraphists in the provinces, who have to come on duty at ten o'clock and work till two o'clock and who then, after two hours off, work from four o'clock till eight o'clock. The typical grievance was that they were not allowed twenty minutes for tea. I do not think that was a reasonable claim, or that the working day I have described was an unreasonable working day, and I hold that the country ought not to be expected to pay for tea-time taken out of the working hours for people engaged on these duties. I put it to the deputation whether meal relief which was not counted as part of their working hours would be accepted; but they replied in the negative, and said that they thought they were entitled to meal relief, and ought to be paid for it. In the judgment of any impartial person was that a reasonable grievance?

I admit also that I have found some duties which have seemed to me unduly arduous and unduly inconvenient. But these are not questions capable of settlement by any general set of rules. They must be judged on their merits, having regard to the person doing the work and the circumstances and conditions under which that work must be done—I mean as regards the despatch of mails or telegrams at the proper time. I venture to say that no Committee, be it a House of Commons Committee or any other, which may be asked to examine this question, could possibly lay down rules for the guidance of the Postmaster-General on all these various matters. I said, therefore, the grounds which were put before me for a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry were all unsuitable for consideration by such a Committee, and some were unsuitable for the consideration of any Committee at all, but that each case, as it arises, must be judged by the Minister who may be from time to time responsible for this great office. But as I have already said in regard to our status of wages, I have come to the conclusion that the wages the postal servants receive are not in all respects satisfactory. I am not certain that in some cases they do not err on the side of being unduly hard, while, on the other hand, they err in the opposite direction, and I think my hands would be strengthened in this matter, and that I should be able to deal more satisfactorily with it if I sought advice from men of practical and business experience. Accordingly, I propose to take that course. I think that such an inquiry should be limited, as I have said, to the question of wages, the adequacy or inadequacy of the wages, having regard to the conditions of the work, and the general remuneration which Post Office employees obtain. I think such an inquiry should be conducted by men of practical business experience, and I think, if we are to get an impartial and judicial decision, the gentlemen who are invited to undertake this most difficult task should be as free from any kind of political and electoral pressure as they should be from any departmental influence. Therefore, if I can obtain the services of such gentlemen, I propose to seek them outside this House and outside the Department. I should suggest a small body of men—I hope not more than five—of practical business experience, who will consent to examine the scale of wages now paid, and who will report for my advice and information as to whether they consider the wages adequate or not. I do not wish to pledge myself to the terms I am now going to read, because I have not had time fully to consider them; but in order to give the Committee an indication of what is in my mind, I may say I think the reference should be something of this kind: "To inquire into the remuneration of the undermentioned classes of Post Office employees, and to report, having regard to the wages current in other employments, whether the wages of postal sorters, London, telegraphists, London, and sorting clerks and telegraphists, provincial, are adequate or inadequate." Those are the four great classes of Post Office employees. If I am fortunate enough to obtain the services of gentlemen who can and will give their time and experience to this matter, I shall hope they will be able to lay down a general opinion on the scale of wages for these classes, and that I or my successor, whoever he may be, will be able to deal with the claims of the minor classes who would not be actually included in the list I have read out. I think it is very important that, if this inquiry is to be satisfactorily conducted, it should be a limited inquiry and not interminable. It is absolutely essential, if I am to get men of business experience to give their time to this matter, that I should reduce the inquiry to reasonable limits, and for this reason I think it necessary to limit it to that definite subject, and so limit the scope of the inquiry. I have approached no one on the subject at present, and therefore I had better say at once that I am not prepared to give any names, but my idea is that these gentlemen should not be members of the Civil Service at the present time; that they should be men of business experience and not Members of this House. [AN HON MEMBER: Nor of the House of Lords.] I would not like to say that under no circumstances would I take a Member of the House of Lords, but if I took a Member of the House of Lords it would have to be on the condition that he had business experience and that he was not subject to any influence whatever.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the question of leave, which is of greatest importance to the Post Office officials, will be included in the scope of the inquiry?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I have made, I think, most clear the length to which I am inclined to go. I am certainly not prepared to place the whole of the duties of the Postmaster-General in the hands of a Committee.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I presume the right hon. Gentleman will give an answer himself on the question of special leave.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): Will the provincial salaries be included?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; the postal sorters, London, telegraphists, London, and sorting clerks and telegraphists, provincial—they are the four classes. I do not want to go outside the scope of the particular case with which I am dealing. I think it would be a great advantage to the Postmaster-General—I think it would strengthen his hands if he had the judgment of a body of business men in this matter of the Post Office wages, but I do not propose to surrender the general duties of the Postmaster-General to a Committee so long as I have the honour to hold office. I ask the Committee to give me all the confidence it can, and when it is unable to give me that confidence I say that that is no reason for granting a Committee to do my work, but only for transferring the office to somebody who is more competent. I thank the Committee for listening to me in the way they have done. It is an unprecedentedly long statement for a Postmaster General to make, but I was anxious to make known the conclusions I had arrived at at the earliest possible moment, in the hope that they will be received in the spirit in which they are made by me, by both sides of the House.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said he congratulated the Postmaster-General on the able speech he had made, and also upon the fact that while he had not promised a Committee of the House, he had promised to appoint a Committee with which they had every reason to be satisfied. The reasons given for not accepting a Parliamentary Committee were most extraordinary. They were that the Postmaster-General had to protect Members of this House against their own constituents, by whom they might be influenced in this matter; and also that the right hon. Gentleman wanted a Committee of business men. There were plenty of business men in the House, and there was no need to go outside for them. He was not willing to give up the rights and privileges of the House of Commons, whose duty it was to remedy the grievances of the public service.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

MIDLAND AND BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL (BY ORDER).

*MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said he had two Motions down on the Order Paper, one of which was: "That the Order [21st April] that the Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill be committed, be read and discharged, and the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of nine Members, five to be nominated by the House, and four by the Committee of Selection. That, subject to the Rules, Orders, and Proceedings of this House, all Petitions against the Bill be referred to the Committee, and that the Petitioners who pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard on their Petitions against the Bill, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill against such Petitions. That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records. That Five be the quorum." And the second: "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill to insert in the Bill a Schedule or Schedules setting forth the local and through rates to be charged on the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway and on the Midland Railway, for the conveyance in and from Ireland of agricultural produce, minerals, and general merchandise, including special charges for small consignments of agricultural produce." When the Bill came up for Second Reading, he had moved its rejection in order that the House might consider the question of the management of Irish railways by English railway companies. At that time he was more concerned with the general principle than with this particular Bill, but he indicated at the time that unless satisfactory assurances were forthcoming the Bill would be strenuously opposed at every stage. Yesterday he received from the promoters a letter setting forth that they had neither the intention nor the desire to raise any rate now prevailing on the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway, and that was a very satisfactory assurance in view of the gross breach of faith of which the wealthy Great Southern and Western Railway was guilty after they had secured amalgamation with the poverty-stricken Waterford and Limerick Line. They stated in the second place their readiness to closely examine and Report upon any demand for better facilities, either in rates or otherwise, where any expectation was held out that development of traffic would result. Thirdly, the promoters offered to give to the Department of Agriculture the fullest information as to all rates, and to concur in discussing before that Department any question as to alleged unreasonable rates on their system. It was obvious, therefore, that this would be an enormous improvement in the present cumbrous, costly and almost useless system, but it was, of course, only an experiment, and was conditional on the Department not exercising their powers as prosecutors under Section 17 of their Act of 1899. Under these circumstances he did not propose to proceed with either of the Motions of which he had given notice.

Motions, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,267,500, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post-Office Revenue."

Mr. BAYLEY said he must again congratulate the Postmaster-General on the clear manner in which he had stated his case. What he wished to know was were the counter clerks, linesmen, and sub-postmasters all included in this Committee of Inquiry. He also submitted that the Post Office staff should be able to give evidence before the Committee, which should also investigate the condition of the auxiliary postmen, among whom there was great discontent because they were not made permanent servants; and were the proceedings of the Committee to be open to the Press? All these were questions upon which they would like to have the right hon. Gentleman's opinion. Another point upon which information was desirable was whether the House would have a chance of voting on the names of the Committee separately, and so raising a discussion.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not propose to ask the Committee to vote on the names, either individually or collectively. Such a thing was entirely contrary to his ideas upon this subject.

Mr. BAYLEY submitted that it was usual, whether a Committee was appointed from the House or outside, to give the House an opportunity of raising a discussion by voting on the names. They were quite willing to meet the hon. Gentleman on this matter, but they would rather have had a Parliamentary Committee, and he thought if the right hon. Gentleman reconsidered the matter and appointed a Parliamentary Committee he would lose nothing and gain much. But this Committee, however constituted, would only deal with part of the grievances of the Post Office officials, and although he had been assured by those whom he represented that the Post Office officials would loyally abide by the decision of the Committee of the House of Commons, the right hon. Gentleman could not expect that there would be the same loyalty with regard to the decision of the Committee he proposed to appoint. However, speaking on behalf of the Post Office officials, he would say that they were quite willing to try the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested, though it was not the Committee they would most have preferred. He hoped it would be appointed and get to work at once.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT said he was glad there seemed to be before them now some practical solution of this matter. The thanks of the Committee were due to the right hon. Gentleman for the manner in which he had put the case to the Committee. Of the administrative reforms promised by the Postmaster-General the introduction of the sixpenny order would be most useful to friendly societies and to the savings banks with which he was officially connected. The action of the right hon. Gentleman in this respect was a distinct aid to providence and thrift. He thought there was room for further reforms. The Post Office during the last half-century had not been altogether a progressive Department. He could not accept the suggestion that the Post Office should be merely regarded as a revenue-producing machine, and he thought it should have the first claim on any surplus it made. While in Canada recently he found very general complaints about the cost of the postage of newspapers from this country, the effect of which had been to flood Canada with American literature and indirectly to exclude literature from the home country. In this direction he hoped the Post Office surplus might be made available.

Twenty years ago there was great discontent on the part of the officers of the Postal service, and that discontent had been growing ever since, and he thought a certain class of the telegraphists had not had their proper and reasonable anticipations realised, and that they had a perfect justification for the discontent which had existed for so long. He also thought the grievance with regard to sanitation justified. He held that there was real ground for the dissatisfaction among certain classes of Post Office employees. The Tweedmouth Committee was a one sided tribunal; the officials were represented on it, but the men not at all. The Postmaster-General, in dwelling so much on the objections to a Parliamentary Committee — objections which he did not share — overlooked what was the exact attitude of the employees. It was quite true that they suggested a Parliamentary Committee, but their general demand was for an independent inquiry, and they had offered to accept the result of any such inquiry. He was glad that, as the result of long and persistent endeavour, this demand was at length to be conceded. The announcement of the right hon. Gentleman was satisfactory so far as it went, but the reference was too limited. There were questions other than that of pay, such as those of special leave and the rights and conditions of combination, of which complaint was made. He hoped the meetings of the inquiry would be open to the Press, and he took it for granted that the employees would have a right to submit witnesses and state their views. His only doubt, subject to the disclosure of the names, was whether the tribunal would have the necessary specific knowledge and experience of Government Departments, which differed in many respects from private business concerns. However, he accepted the inquiry in good faith, and sincerely hoped, in the interests both of the employees and of the State, that the long-existing, and sometimes embittered, series of differences would be brought to an end, so that the country should have the willing, able, and contented services of this great body of public servants.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the excellent precedent he had set of making a statement before the general discussion on the Vote was opened. If in connection with other Votes similar clear and candid statements were made by the Ministers concerned, he believed it would shorten the debates and conduce to the efficiency of the proceedings of the Committee. One of the gravest faults of the right hon. Gentleman's Department in the past had been its extreme rigidity, and a lack of willingness to modify its conditions to meet public or private demands. He therefore welcomed the more progressive spirit suggested by the right hon. Gentleman's statement. It was quite refreshing to hear talk of reforms, because in the past they had been most difficult to secure. The proposed changes were to some extent useful. More frequent deliveries in rural districts had long been required. The Post Office existed not as a profit-making Department but for the convenience of the public, although there was no doubt that the more facilities they granted the greater would be the amount of business done, and, consequently, the greater the amount of revenue received. The modification with regard to postal orders would also be a convenience to the public, but he regretted it had been accompanied by the restrictions with regard to the purchase of postage stamps. Those restrictions would interfere largely with a legitimate method of passing money from one person to another; they would be a hindrance to business, a detriment to trade, and an inconvenience to the public.

The demands of the employees had been divided under three heads—wages, sanitary conditions, and relief from work for meals. As to the question of wages, the right hon. gentleman had taken a course which, he thought, would probably meet the demands of the employees. He did not, however, think that the reference was altogether satisfactory. It ought, in his opinion, to be settled in conference with representatives of the Post Office workmen. As to the question of the sanitation of Post Office buildings and telegraph offices, he regretted that a suggestion made a year or two ago that a Home Office inspector should be called in when complaints on this head were made was not adopted. Surely it would be better to call in an impartial official unconnected with the Post Office to look into these matters. At present the men had to make their complaints to their superiors, and this caused friction. That would be avoided if an inspector, specially appointed for the inspection of workshops, were allowed, at the request of the Postmaster-General, to enter these premises and to ascertain if the sanitation was satisfactory. He thought the complaints of sanitation were borne out by the sick-leave figures, which, considering that the Post Office employees were a select class, were too high, being seven-and-a-half days per annum on the average, as compared with nine days among the members of friendly societies, who belonged to all classes, including those engaged in dangerous trades.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that seven-and-a-half days' sick-leave was the average among those who received full pay when absent. The average among those whose illness involved sacrifice was 5 2, which was little more than half what the hon. Member quoted as the friendly society average.

SIR WALTER FOSTER believed that those who were not on the full establishment did not all work in Post Office buildings.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Nor do those on the full establishment.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said that probably the proportion of those on the establishment working in Post Office buildings would be greater than the proportion of those not on the establishment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The out-door staff complain that their work is more unhealthy than the work inside.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said that was hardly in consonance with scientific observation. The out-door staff ought to have less sickness than the in-door staff. The Committee would see the difficulty of drawing any conclusion from statistics which were more or less conjectural; in fact, there were no figures on which an argument could really be based. He believed, however, that the rate of seven-and-a-half days per annum was higher than it should be, and justified the question of sanitary arrangements being gone into. As to meal intervals, it appeared that the men had frequently to go six hours without food, and, in times of pressure, even longer, so that just when the telegraphic work was heaviest the men were most exhausted from want of food. This was bad economy on the part of the Post Office, and bad treatment of the men. He therefore thought there was reason for the reconsideration of the claim of the staff to have intervals for refreshment, especially when the hours were extended by the necessity for working overtime.

*MR. GOULDING (Wiltshire, Devizes) expressed his satisfaction at having the Postmaster-General once more in the popular assembly. No public Department spread so widely amongst the public as the Post Office, and he did not think there was a Member of the House who did not receive evidence of that fact by numerous letters from his constituents in regard to the Post Office. He desired most sincerely to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the concession he had made with regard to postal orders. The sick pay of friendly societies was invariably paid by postal orders, and it had been a great burden to have to send two or three postal orders to make up small amounts. The change in regard to the signing of postal orders would also prove a very great advantage. The fact that my right hon. friend is going to issue these new postal orders at 1d. will also be an advantage. As the representative of a working class constituency he desired to refer to the Committee which was going to be appointed to inquire into the question of the wages of Post Office employees. He commended the right hon. Gentleman's action in not appointing a Committee of the House of Commons which would be influenced by the electorate, and he thought they would get a much better decision from a Committee appointed from outside of men connected with business and commercial undertakings. He rejoiced that his right hon. friend had taken upon himself the burden of deciding the other questions. In the past they had had too much of Ministers delegating their responsibilities to Committees, and it was much better that they should come and defend their action in the House of Commons instead of appointing Commissions and Committees, behind whose reports the Minister afterwards sheltered himself. The Postmaster - General had determined to take the burden upon himself, and he was ready to wait with confidence the decision of his right hon. friend because, as regarded all these questions which must come before him, he was sure he would give a decision worthy of the support of the House.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the Postmaster-General deserved the thanks of the public for the three or four concessions he had made. They were small concessions, but they were sensible, cheap, and convenient, and he hoped they would be the forerunner of a number of other concessions which would be suggested both by questions and the criticisms upon this Vote. But whilst thanking the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done for the public, he attached greater importance not to the concessions but to the speech which the Postmaster-General had made in regard to the treatment of the Post Office staff. He regarded that speech as one of the most serious statements ever made by a responsible Minister, for it was significant of social and political changes which were coming over certain classes in the Government service, and they indicated a serious moral decadence of the House of Commons when they found that the Postmaster-General was so impressed by the claims and petitions that came from his Department that he was prepared to sub-let his authority to an irresponsible Committee of outsiders, and to sub-contract the duty of every Member of Parliament to keep the common charge of the purse and to relax its strings or be more economical as the facts and circumstances warranted. As a Member of the House of Commons he protested against the statement that had been made by the Postmaster-General. He had told them that the staff he commanded was a staff of good character, honesty, capacity and zeal, and he said also that it was inevitable that the staff should complain and make memorials and requests, some of which were serious but mostly trivial. So long as employers of labour employed workmen there was sure to be a demand for shorter hours, for more holidays, and other conditions, which they need not now go into, and when a Minister was responsible for employing a number of men it should be regarded as inevitable that there must be more or less discontent and the men would ask for more wages and shorter hours, and for that which others enjoyed and which they did not receive. It was his business to adapt means to ends, and if postal employees were unreasonable and went further than the taxpayers' responsibility would allow, then it was the duty of the Postmaster-General to stand to his guns and resist this electoral pressure. Failing that courageous attitude, if he thought he was going to get rid of future agitation by appointing this Committee of independent outsiders, he was living in a fool's paradise and perpetuating agitation, because when this independent Committee was appointed it would be suspected even before it went to work; it would be considered partial and discredited; and its report would make the employees more discontented; and, to that extent, would cause friction, jealousy, and prejudice.

The hon. Member for Devizes said that the tendency in recent years had been to snub the House of Commons, and he illustrated this by quoting the Royal Commission and the Special Commission. He said there had been too much delegation by Ministers of their duties to Committees and Commissions. In his opinion, instead of this delegation to an independent Committee of outsiders, he thought the Postmaster-General ought to decide these matters himself, and failing that they ought to have a Committee of the House of Commons. He thought this was a kind of delegation of work which would do more harm than good to the Post Office. This Committee was to be appointed to inquire into the wages, the hours of labour, relief and questions of sanitation [Cries of "No, no."] He understood now that this inquiry was to be confined to wages only. Did the Postmaster-General think that a narrow reference of wages alone, with hours of labour and sanitation left out, was going to please this staff of 180,000? Did he think an independent Committee of outsiders on wages alone would satisfy them? Certainly not, and there would be great dissatisfaction. In asking that this Committee should be appointed, the Postmaster-General said that as a preliminary he had received deputations and memorials in the presence of some Members of Parliament with postal representatives present, and he found that some of the grievances were serious and some were trivial. This independent Committee would not deal with some of the serious grievances because they were outside the scope of the reference. There was no reason why they should submit the trivial grievances to the Committee at all. The House of Commons was satisfied that the Postal Service had done their cause incalculable harm in the House of Commons and in the Press by the way in which they had exalted the immaterial and the non-essential, and left the substantial grievances alone. Take a man starting work at ten o'clock in the morning. He works till two, and then after two hours interval, starts again at four and works till eight o'clock. The postal officials would never convince the House of Commons that this was a grievance.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear.

Mr. JOHN BURNS thought the Postmaster-General should say when postal servants were wrong and why their grievances were trivial.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I told the deputation of Post Office employees upon this subject—when a typical case was described by them — that I thought they had no case at all, and that I could not for a moment entertain their suggestion.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said he thought they might find, in regard to the question of wages, that some of the complaints were equally trivial, and they might find that some were serious grievances. He would, however, rather have the view of the Postmaster-General at his post, supported by the House of Commons, as to whether those grievances were well-founded. In consequence of electoral pressure and intimidation the right hon. Gentleman had decided that he could not appoint a Committee of the House of Commons or a Committee wholly of the House of Lords, but he had resolved to go outside, and appoint an independent Committee of distinguished outsiders, to whom he was prepared to sub-let his authority, and the House of Commons would sub-contract their duty. As a Member of the House of Commons, he objected to this undermining, first, of the authority of the Postmaster-General, and secondly, he refused to allow the sub-letting of his own responsibility with regard to 180,000 postal employees. If all that the Postmaster-General had said with regard to influence at elections were true, influence which amounted almost to electoral intimidation, the real remedy for that lay, not in an outside Committee, which might pacify the staff for a year, but in disfranchisement.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Will you vote for disfranchisement?

MR. JOHN BURNS said under certain circumstances he would. It was for the right hon. Gentleman to prove the case. If 180,000 persons employed by the State were using unfair electoral pressure and causing people to seek the protection of the Postmaster-General, if they were intimidating Members of this House to such an extent that they were incapable of discharging their duty, then the remedy was not an outside Committee but disfranchisement for servants who were capable of using this intimidatory and corrupt power upon Members of Parliament. He had been twelve years a Member of the House of Commons, and invariably the official voters in his own district were practically unanimously against him. He hoped they would continue to be against him, because then he knew where they were. He had rarely, if ever, advocated the claims of sections of Government servants, and never intended to. If the House of Commons did not do their duty to their own servants, and were influenced improperly, they would show that they were devoid of moral courage and lacked a sense of duty to the taxpayer. Fancy the Glasgow Corporation, because their men asked for an extra ½d. an hour, saying, "We will not refuse this because they will vote against us." Fancy the London County Council, employing 12,000 men, saying, in regard to a claim of their workmen, "If we do not listen to this claim we shall not be able to face the electors, because of the pressure they will bring to bear upon us." The exercise of such an influence in municipal administration would produce confusion, and the government of all our big cities would pass into the hands of municipal servants, simply because the members of the Corporation did not display moral courage in the discharge of their duties. When the tramway men or the policemen made a claim before a municipality, what happened? The question was invariably referred to a Committee, and newspaper men were not there. It was considered by a practical business Committee, who on their own responsibility to the taxpayer and their duty to the workmen fitted in the wages accordingly. If they did not think the claims of the workmen should be granted, they told them so frankly; and, of course, if their claims were reasonable they were granted. Who was this Committee going to be? They were not going to have Peers or a Committee of the House of Commons. The Postmaster-General did not want to do his duty by dealing with these questions individually, and so was going to appoint this outside Committee of Inquiry. He supposed one of the members would be Mr. Harrod, of Harrod's Stores, another Mr. W. Whiteley, another Sir T. Lipton, the fourth a railway director, and the fifth, possibly, Mr. Macnamara, the Post Office horse contractor. Would a Committee of that kind give satisfaction to 180,000 employees? Certainly not. They would all be employers of labour, and some of them would consider 12s. a week high wages in the country, and 18s. or £1 a week good wages in towns. Immediately this Committee commenced their investigations, the postal servants would be encouraged to suspect and discredit the Committee. They ought not to allow this thing to be done. The Postmaster-General said they wanted business men to deal with this question, but were there no business men in the House of Commons? If he were Postmaster-General he would nominate a Peer as chairman, and the two Members for Oxford and Cambridge Universities, or, if that did not suit, he would select five men who had majorities of 4,000 in their constituencies, and few postal servants to bring pressure to bear on them. He believed that would better satisfy the Post Office employees.

The reference to the Committee was to be on the question of wages only. But that would cause discontent rather than allay it. It would apply to 100,000 out of 180,000 men, the best paid, the men who worked the shortest hours and who had greater chances of promotion, while it would leave outside 80,000. The men left out would include the auxiliary postmen, and the House of Commons did not want a Committee to decide whether they were overworked and underpaid. They were all agreed upon that already. No one would say 18s. a week was a wage on which the auxiliary postman could decently support himself and family, and if the Postmaster-General was to ask the House of Commons to make it 20s., or even 24s., they would unanimously support him.

He did not agree that the Home Office should be called in to look after insanitation in the Post Office. He believed that nine-tenths of the complaints of the postal servants with regard to insanitary post offices could be dealt with in the same way as other nuisances of the same kind were dealt with, by deciding that the post office was like a workshop or factory, and came within the purview of the local authority. He was in favour of equal rights for all white men, whether they were Post Office servants or not. He did not think very much had been made out of that point. As a member of a great friendly society, he had investigated the subject of health in the industries of the country, and he found that the health of postal servants and municipal servants compared favourably with that of the general population, while with regard to absence of liability to accident and injury they were considerably above the average of any other trade. He was elected to the House of Commons by a working class constituency, and one of his duties was to vote for trade-union conditions for all Government workmen, and to see that they were properly and fairly treated and not needlessly pampered or pandered to. This independent Committee which the Postmaster-General proposed to appoint would possibly do the postal servants a great injustice by not satisfactorily meeting their reasonable demands. In that case the Postmaster-General would be badgered next year on the Estimates to rectify their shortcomings. Indeed, it would perpetuate the agitation and increase the pressure on members of Parliament to have matters rectified. The effect would be to undermine the discipline of the Post Office, to undermine the authority of the Postmaster-General, and, generally speaking, to sap that respect which the staff was prepared to give to any Postmaster-General who made the concessions due to them, but who would stand up with a face of steel against trivial grievances. That was not a peculiar doctrine for a labour representative to give utterance to. Members of the County Council and of the Borough Councils knew that when they were fair and reasonable in dealing with the complaints of employees, the working-class ratepayers would stand by them. Hon. Members had been rushing to the Postmaster-General and congratulating him on the step he had taken. Why? Because it relieved some Members of Parliament from telling postal servants when wrong that they were wrong, and thereby incurring electoral displeasure. In the absence of disfranchisement, they might find it necessary to appoint a small permanent Committee of the House of Commons to sit with the Postmaster-General and advise him in precisely the same way as committees of municipalities advised the mayor, the engineer, the clerk, and other officers, and if unfair and ridiculous demands were made, the Committee would stand up and support the right hon. Gentleman in refusing to give concessions, and, on the other hand, they would share the responsibility for the concessions which they considered to be justified. If the House of Commons would do that very little would be heard of these complaints. The Postmaster-General had not had the moral courage to face the situation. He had hoped for better things from the right hon. Gentleman, who had shown capacity and patience during the short time he had occupied his present office. He was afraid that in this matter the right hon. Gentleman had listened to the voice of the charmer, in the person of the permanent official, who had advised him to appoint a Committee in order that responsibility might be diverted to other shoulders. The only way to stop log-rolling and the intimidation of Members was for the House of Commons to do its duty and to take the consequences at the polls. He protested against their executive and administrative duties being taken away from them and handed over to a body of men who would stir up greater discontent than there had ever been in the past.

*MR. DUKE (Plymouth) said that the hon. Member for Battersea had been less generous than he usually was. The hon. Member accused the Postmaster-General of abnegation of his functions, and the Members of the House of abnegation of their functions. He seemed to take the view that Members of Parliament, with one exception, were afraid to do what they ought to do in the direction of reform, because they had some base anxiety as to whether they would lose some votes which the hon. Member thought were purchasable votes. The hon. Member did not usually deal thus with his colleagues in the House, and he hoped he would bear with him if he presumed to point out that he did not think he had dealt fairly with the Postmaster-General or the House. In the course of the discussion on this subject last year, he ventured to say with regard to a class of postal servants—those who were not established in the Post Office—that to his mind they were badly treated by the public. He thought so now. He was glad that hon. Members who more directly represented labour, bore in mind that there might be a conflict of interest between established servants of the Post Office and other branches of the Civil Service, and the general body of working people in the country who provided to some extent the wages out of which public servants were paid. But that did not dispose of this matter. The Postmaster-General had a duty to discharge on his own responsibility, and if he did not discharge it there was an appeal to the House. He did not understand the Postmaster-General at all resented that view of his responsibility. It was pressed upon him with not quite so much temper last year as it was this year, and he was told he was not taking the position which the head of a Department employing a great deal of labour ought to take in his dealings with the labourers in its employment, at its disposal, and to some extent helpless in its hands. That was pressed upon him. What course had the Postmaster-General taken that day? He had not come and said, "I wash my hands of it; take charge of it yourselves." On the contrary, the Postmaster General had most properly said that which the hon. Member said he ought to have said. The Postmaster-General had said, "This is my responsibility." It was his responsibility, and it was the responsibility of hon. Members to see that he exercised it, and how he exercised it. The great difficulty in dealing with the question of proper wages and proper terms of employment of public servants, was the absolute ignorance which most Members of the House shared of what must guide the Postmaster-General, and ought to guide the House itself in coming to a conclusion on these matters. The Postmaster-General said that up to this time he had acted on the advice of those responsible to him in his Department, but Members of the House challenged that upon representations made by their constituents. Up to this point it was a constitutional position. He denied absolutely that any constituent was disentitled from coming to him and saying that he had a grievance, and that he was oppressed by the head of a Department in which he was a servant. He denied that there was any right on the part of the head of a Department to refuse to listen to the grievances of the employees. But how was anyone without special knowledge to know whether there were real grievances? The Postmaster-General had a generous confidence in those who advised him. The servants of the Post Office on the other hand had convinced many Members of the House that there were grievances and the Postmaster-General had been bound to take that into account. What did the right hon. Gentleman say? He said—

> "You represent to me that my advisers are biassed and prejudiced. I will go outside of my Department. I will go outside the House and I will find five men of business who are experts in these matters, and they shall tell you what the facts of the matter are."

When the Postmaster-General had got that information he would know more than he knew now. For his own part, he did not care so much about that, but he was selfishly glad because he himself would know more than he knew now. He would be in a position with regard to the representation of grievances, which appeared to him to be real grievances, to say to the employees if their grievances were unreal that their case had been considered by experts and men of business, that he saw what the Committee said and that he could go no farther in advocating the redress of grievances on their part, and that he must stay his hand. On the other hand real grievances would be redressed. What was there unconstitutional in that? There were Members of the House who had not the advantage of the hon. Member for Battersea in dealing with labour questions. In taking steps to assist them the Postmaster-General was not delegating his functions, nor was the House of Commons delegating its functions. He ventured to ask the hon. Member for Battersea whether he had not done a little injustice to the Postmaster-General and some of those who had advocated the claims of the civil servants.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said he had not consciously done injustice to the Postmaster-General. He wanted to save the right hon. Gentleman from a world of dissatisfaction and discontent. It was out of regard and respect for him that he had warned him in the way he had done.

Mr. DUKE said he had not that tenderness about the Postmaster-General, who must fight his own battle. He was very sorry that there was not some such Committee as the hon. Member for Battersea referred to, and to which the lowly servants of the State who were helpless in the hands of Ministers and heads of Departments, could go and properly present their grievances, instead of having the hopeless and disappointing task of going day by day, month by month, and year by year, and making representations to Members of this House, who were practically helpless, but who had absolute goodwill and the desire to help them. They had no means of knowing the rights of the matter, and so far as he could see there was no way of ascertaining the facts in any constitutional way except that proposed by the Postmaster-General, to whom he was exceedingly thankful for making the proposal.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said that one of the subjects he understood the Postmaster-General to reserve to himself was the vexed question of leave of absence. When the Postmaster-General dealt with that subject he would ask him to say that the men who were constitutionally taking an active part in the men's organisation should have every facility to attend their council meetings and executive gatherings, in whatever part of the kingdom they might be. Difficulties ought not to be placed in the way of men discharging a duty which had been imposed on them by their fellow-workmen. That was a matter of considerable importance, and one which had caused a great deal of irritation. Knowing the Postmaster-General's disposition to meet reasonable demands, he felt certain that if the subject were brought under his notice he would see that those difficulties were removed or modified. Another point was, that when this Committee was appointed and proceeded to take evidence, he hoped every facility would be given to take the evidence of men who were best acquainted with the grievances of the Post Office servants, namely, the officials of their trades unions. Let there be no hesitation about inviting the leaders of the movement and affording them every opportunity of venting the grievances they represented and had mastered.

In regard to sanitation, he had a case to bring under the notice of the Postmaster-General when he was Secretary to the Treasury, and he was bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman had carried out his pledge to remedy the complaint. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be encouraged to go on in that direction. Two years ago the Committee on Trade was engaged in the prolonged work of consolidating the Factories and Workshops Acts, and the great majority of the Committee would have inserted clauses in that Act empowering inspectors to visit all Post Office establishments and see into their sanitary condition but for a pledge that was given by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, then Home Secretary, that he would make such representations to the Post Office Department as would lead them to deal effectively with the complaints laid before the Committee. The Committee did refrain from inserting any clause, relying in good faith on the pledge of the Home Secretary, and the success which they anticipated would follow the right hon. Gentleman's representations to the Postmaster-General. The right hon. Gentleman opposite was now in full command, and was strong enough to carry out a policy, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee his word that he would further see into this question of sanitation. The servants of the State should not be obliged to engage in operations under conditions highly injurious and even dangerous to their health. There was much to be said for the appointment of an outside Committee. The Postmaster-General had made out a case for it, at any rate to his complete satisfaction; but the right hon. Gentleman would not accuse Members of any want of consideration, or disregard for his opinions, if some of them differed from him on this point. There were some questions which might be dealt with best by an outside Committee, but in a case of this kind he had the firmest conviction that it would have been better to have confined the constitution of this Committee of Inquiry to Members of the House of Commons, with, if ornamentation was wanted, one or two Members of the House of Lords thrown in. Such an inquiry should be conducted by persons responsible to the community, and not by irresponsible outsiders, who would have no one to challenge them except those who had appointed them. A Committee sitting upstairs would have given a full measure of satisfaction to all concerned in these complaints. However, such apparently was not to be the case; the Postmaster-General was master of the situation, and appeared to be determined to carry out his own policy, which hon. Members could not prevent. But might he join with his hon. friend the Member for Chesterfield Division in humbly submitting the claim of the House of Commons to have something to say as to the constitution of that Committee, either in taking objection to certain proposed names, or in submitting others? The Postmaster-General shook his head at that, and apparently the right hon. Gentleman meant that he was going to appoint the Committee on the authority of his own selection, and that the House of Commons would share no responsibility for the composition of the Committee. [Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear.] He would not then argue the point further, but only express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would appoint a capable, fair-minded, and competent Committee, and that it would make an exhaustive report. The inquiry would really partake of the nature of an arbitration, and he trusted that every one interested would have a full and free opportunity of submitting his evidence.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said he thought that the champions of the Post Office employees had every reason to congratulate themselves upon the statement of the Postmaster-General. They might not have got everything they asked for, but they had got a promise of an inquiry by an absolutely fair and impartial body. For himself, he preferred an entirely outside body, for such a purpose, to a Committee of the House of Commons. One of the dangers of municipal trading was that it put members of municipalities into a similar position to that of Members of Parliament, upon whom constituents exercised pressure. However, what was wanted now was not to discuss the grievances of the men, but the administration of the Post Office, and the facilities which have been given by it to the public. He congratulated the Postmaster-General and the Committee on the increased facilities promised, and while he approved of most of them, he thought the suggestion of placing restrictions on the sale of stamps across the counter by the public to the Post Office would be most inconvenient and irksome. The existing practice was convenient and handy, and therefore he hoped the matter would be re-considered, and the proposal withdrawn.

He wanted to ask the Postmaster-General whether he could not see his way to making the parcel post more useful in country districts. They had heard much lately of the difficulties farmers had to deal with in regard to railway freights on agricultural produce. These difficulties might be very largely met by an improvement of the parcel post service, which was much more useful in the town than in the country. In towns there were frequent deliveries, and a post office for collection was in every other street, so that it was perfectly easy for tradesmen to despatch their small parcels by that means. But in the country districts the case was very different; farms were widely scattered, and far from the nearest post office; and while the Department distributed parcels, no effort was made to collect them. He suggested that the Department should organise a collection of parcels as well as a delivery; if they went to the expense of the one, why not of the other. Alternatively, the Department might authorise every postman going along the country roads to collect parcels, take letters, and sell stamps; in fact, to be a travelling Post Office. If that were done, it would do a great service to the country districts. Then, again, the limit of weight, at present 11 lbs., should be increased, if there was to be any system which was really to compete with the railways, and enable farmers to send their produce cheaply to the market.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he regretted that he could not take the same view of the constitution of the Committee of Inquiry as the hon. Member for Tunbridge. He viewed the appointment of that Committee with some apprehension. He thought a much better method would have been for the Postmaster-General to investigate all the matters and grievances raised, and decide for himself. The Postmaster-General was in a constitutional position to do so, and had a constitutional responsibility to the House of Commons; whereas, a Committee appointed from outside would be like a corporation, which had neither a soul to be damned nor a body to be kicked. From some indication the Postmaster-General had given in reply to the hon. Member for Leicester, the House of Commons was not to be told the names of the members of the Committee, or to have a right to express any opinion in regard to them. The hon. Member for Tunbridge said that this Committee would be a perfectly fair and impartial one. How did he know that?

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that it would be fair and impartial if it partook of the nature sketched by the Postmaster General.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said he was sure that the Postmaster-General would not appoint a Committee which he did not think fair and impartial; but in an ordinary wages dispute a tribunal would hardly be considered satisfactory on which there was not something like a fair division of representation between the classes interested, with, perhaps, an impartial person as an arbitrator or chairman. In Lancashire they had a Board of Wages, consisting of half employees and half employers, with an employer as chairman; and in Wales during the coal dispute there was a Board of six miners and six coal-owners, with an impartial chairman. That was what he called an impartial tribunal. They might dispute as to the wages question in the Post Office, but he could not imagine any possible division of opinion on the point that the State ought to be a model employer in seeing that its servants worked in healthy surroundings. It was shocking to know that the Post Office officials frequently worked under conditions imperilling their health and life. He had before him the report of a very important and interesting conference which took place between representatives of the Post Office workers and a number of Unionist and Liberal Members of the House of Commons. He wished to call the attention of the Postmaster-General to a statement which had been communicated to him, but as to the correctness of which he could not pledge himself, as he had no means of knowing. It was with reference to a post office regarding the sanitation of which there had been many complaints. A Committee inspected it, and reported that it was satisfactory. Afterwards, in consequence of the pressure which was brought to bear, the Duke of Norfolk visited it, and was so horrified that he insisted on an immediate expenditure of £15,000.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot trace any history which corresponds to that statement, which was made to me before.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: If that statement were correct it certainly showed a most shocking state of affairs. The idea of a great public Department keeping its servants in laborious employment, which involved a great strain, in insanitary surroundings, ought to shock the conscience of the country. The other day, at Liverpool, some gentlemen came to him from the Birkenhead Office, and they made a statement as to the conditions of work in that post office which shocked him. The complaint was that the post office accommodation was inadequate, that it was provided at a time when the work was very much smaller than at present, that the men were overworked, that they were constantly breathing bad air as the result of overcrowding, and that the staff was always diminished by men absent on sick leave. He had no opportunity of testing these statements, but they impressed him because of the emphasis with which they were made; and it struck him that such surroundings were certainly not creditable to the Post Office Department. The case was aggravated by the fact that there was a site, the property of the Post Office, available for the new Post Office necessitated by the enormous growth of Birkenhead; but at the present moment it served the purpose of a travelling circus, and the unfortunate officials were kept in insanitary surroundings, with the added grievance that before their eyes was a site for a better building. All those matters could be easily brought to a test. He was a member of the Factories Committee, which did a great deal of good work for the working classes of the country. It was proposed that the Post Office should be brought under the Factory Law, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was a master of mystification, said that a public Department could not be brought under the Factory Acts, and he gave reasons with which he himself was taken in at the time, though he could not understand why the State should escape restrictions with regard to labour which it imposed on other employers. Could anything be more grotesque than a Committee of this House imposing grave restrictions, some of them no doubt expensive and inconvenient restrictions, with regard to labour, and at the same time allowing the Government to escape. He considered that position quite illogical; and unless the Postmaster-General was able to further enlighten him he could not understand why the State should escape the healthy restrictions imposed on other employers.

His hon. friend the Member for the Clitheroe Division was a member of the Town Council of Darwen, a town which had the great advantage of supplying most of the paper used by the newspaper Press in this country. His hon. friend was a member of a Committee which visited those paper factories; they examined them; they went into all the sanitary arrangements; and they made recommendations when they found the state of things not very desirable. The manufacturers did not like this outside interference, but still they had to submit to it. The recommendations of the Committee were so reasonable that they were adopted by the Home Office, and the Home Office sent a circular to every paper factory in Darwen insisting on the recommendations being carried out. Why were those gentlemen entitled to visit every factory in Darwen and compelled to pass by the door of the Post Office? Had they not as much right to go into the Post Office as into any other building where labour was employed? If they went into the Post Office and found it in an insanitary condition, surely the Post Office, instead of resisting such interference, should welcome it. It would save them a lot of trouble, give them a lot of information, and enable them to do their duty to those for whom, as employers, they were responsible. The fact was that if the Post Office would consent to an independent inspection by the local sanitary authorities half the complaints would disappear, and if the remedies which would be recommended were adopted he had no hesitation in saying that the right hon. Gentleman would hear little more of complaints.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Several points have been raised during the course of this debate to which I think I ought to make some reply. Let me deal, first of all, with the matter to which the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken mainly addressed himself, and which also formed the subject of comment by several other hon. Gentlemen. I thoroughly agree with the hon. Gentleman when he said that the servants of the State should not be obliged to work under insanitary or improper conditions. I think, however, there are reasons—though I will not attempt to give them, as the hon. Gentleman found difficulty in understanding them, even when they were put by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—why Crown offices should not be treated in exactly the same way as establishments carried on for private profit and conducted by private enterprise. I think I am right in saying that the hon. Gentleman himself was the leader of that band of Members who resisted the inspection of conventual laundries by the Home Office, and other establishments of that kind where work was carried on.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I do not think that that is quite a fair observation. In the first place, I was not a leader of the band at all; I had not that honour, although I was a member of it. At the same time the right hon. Gentleman would admit that profound religious feelings were stirred in regard to that question; and I do not think it is quite fair that the right hon. Gentleman should use that argument against me.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not wish to do anything unfair, or to press the argument for more than it is worth. I had no intention of causing any offence to the hon. Gentleman by saying he was the leader of that band. I thought he was the leader, because he moved the Amendment. But in any case let me put the hon. Gentleman out of the question, if he will allow me, and take it on its merits. Here were certain establishments, conducted by private persons, deliberately excluded by this House from Home Office factory inspection. The hon. Gentleman says that they were excluded because profound religious feeling was stirred up. That is perfectly true; but I should say that safeguarding the sanitary conditions in which the people work, the importance of preserving the health of the people, and the danger that possibly some necessary precaution may be overlooked, are not less in the case of those laundries than in the case of the Government establishments; and I think I am entitled, to that extent, without venturing on the religious question at all, to put that as against the general expression of opinion delivered by the hon. Gentleman. I think that in some cases, where there is good reason to doubt whether a post office is or is not sanitary, the Postmaster-General might well have recourse to the advice and assistance of the Home Office through its factory inspectors. I myself recently received a report from a Home Office inspector on the accommodation at the General Post Office which may remove some of the hon. Gentleman's misapprehensions. I have no doubt that had the General Post Office been in the hon. Gentleman's constituency he would have received as shocking an account regarding it as he received about the offices he mentioned. The Home Office inspector went over the General Post Office, and the only alterations he recommended were certainly very trifling. They are now carried out. He said that the air was generally good, the sanitary condition excellent, and that although the building was neither a factory nor a workshop it would comply with the requirements of the Factory Acts had they been applicable. Hon. Gentlemen must understand that these *ex parte* statements made in regard to the sanitary condition of post offices must not be accepted as definite and final proof. At the same time it is quite true that in some cases where we are about to move into a new office, I cannot, for the short term that the staff may remain in the old office, recommend that large expenditure should be undertaken for sanitary and other requirements. But all these cases should be brought to the notice of the Postmaster-General, and, if brought to his notice, he will investigate them. My complaint is, not that the members of the Post Office staff should go to hon. Members and make statements, and that hon. Members should raise questions in this House. My complaint is that they should go to hon. Members in preference to coming to the Postmaster-General, to whom, I would hope, they might have gone in these matters, he being their natural friend and protector, and beyond whom they should not go until, at any rate, they had failed to obtain redress at his hands. Of course the debate has turned on the statement I made as to the action I propose to take in order to obtain advice regarding the scales of wages paid to certain classes of Post Office officials. With a great deal of what the hon. Member for Battersea said I am in agreement. But I do not agree with him in what I understood him to lay down as the duty of a Minister in my position. The hon. Member says that if I ask gentlemen outside this House to advise me—gentlemen whom I shall try to choose because they are competent to give advice—if I ask such gentlemen to give me advice, I am sub-letting my authority and derogating from the dignity of this House. He suggests that I ought sooner to act on my own responsibility, and not go to anyone outside for advice; that I ought to take my own line in dealing with these questions and refuse any other form of inquiry. I do not know how long the hon. Member has held such views.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have always held them, both with regard to municipal and to State servants. I think the Postmaster-General's staff is more competent to advise him on questions of wages and hours than any outside experts.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I regret the hon. Member has not expressed those views before. Last year, when the hon. Member for the Chesterfield Division moved for an inquiry into Post Office grievances—not a limited inquiry into a specific point, but a general inquiry into the whole range of Post Office administration—and proposed a reduction in the salary of the Postmaster-General by way of giving effect to his views, the hon. Member for Battersea supported him.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Yes. But why? Because we were asking for a Committee of this House to assist the Postmaster General.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member's objection is not to sub-letting or taking advice from other people; it is only to the proposal to select gentlemen who are not Members of this House, instead of throwing the matter into the hands of a Committee of this House. He was good enough to tell me how he would select such a Committee. He said he would take the Members for the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, because they have no postal employees amongst their constituents, and because, I suppose, they would be especially impartial men on labour questions, as they had never been concerned in business transactions. Then he would add a Peer, possibly to give dignity to the Committee. What a strange selection! By what authority is the Postmaster-General to nominate such a Committee as that? Surely the hon. Member knows that his suggestion is not practicable for any Postmaster-General or any Minister of the Crown to follow. That is not the way in which Select Committees are nominated. For my own part, I have given a great deal of attention to this wages question since I have been responsible for the management of the Post Office. Before I held my present office, I had some knowledge of it, as, in my capacity of Secretary to the Treasury, I represented the Postmaster-General in this House, but now that my responsibility is more direct my knowledge is more complete, and my opportunities of acquiring information are greater. While I think that, on the whole, the Post Office scales of pay are just, and even rather generous, and that it is quite possible that an inquiry might show that in some cases they are too high, it is also clear that in some cases they might not be justified, and I do not believe that a Minister of the Crown derogates from his own authority, or the dignity of the House, by seeking advice from those who are competent to give it. The course I propose to adopt will not lessen my responsibility, but will enable me to come to a decision, with the concurrence of the Treasury, in the light of fuller information. I intend to give the names of the Committee to the House as soon as they are complete, but I think it inadvisable to submit their names to be voted on by the House. I decline to ask busy men to give their time to the public service in this way, with the condition that their names shall first be submitted. If the names I submit do not meet with the approval of the House, it will be for the House to express its want of confidence in me. I think it would be impossible to get men of the authority and position I hope to secure, unless the scope of the inquiry is kept within reasonable bounds. Having once come to a conclusion as to the proper scales of pay for the classes I have named, it will be comparatively easy for the Postmaster-General to decide as to the other standards.

My hon. friend the Member for Tunbridge has raised the question of extending the facilities for the collection of parcels in the rural districts. I understand my hon. friend to suggest that postmen, delivering in rural districts, should be empowered to sell stamps and to accept letters and parcels; but a postman in a rural district does these things now, although, of course, he cannot carry more than a certain weight. It is one thing for a postman to accept parcels and letters offered to him on his round and another thing to say that, whether he has letters to deliver at a house or not, he shall call to see whether there is anything to send away. That will be a very large undertaking. It could not be carried out with the present staff, and would utterly disorganise the delivery of letters. If, however, he could see his way to further development, he should not be slow to adopt it. As to the suggestion that extra facilities should be given for the carriage of parcels of agricultural produce the late Mr. Hanbury, with whom I discussed this matter, was unable to suggest a scheme, and I can only say that if I can possibly find one I shall not be unwilling to adopt it. The hon. Member for Leicester has asked me as to the question of special leave of absence. I dealt with that subject fully last year. At the present time working postmen have fourteen days' holiday on full pay in the year. In addition to that, subject to the necessities of the moment, they may have ten days' special leave with pay, if they apply for it, on their providing a substitute. Is not that reasonable leave as compared with what working men in other employments are allowed? I think it is very generous, and I do not hold it is right to give any further concession in that direction. On that point I have given my final reply to the Post Office officials. Seeing that we have had ample discussion may I appeal to the Committee to allow us to get the Vote, especially as no reduction has been moved.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) regretted that the right hon. Gentleman, in endeavouring to make a case against the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, should have introduced the question of the inspection of conventual institutions. The argument was not well founded, because the hon. Member had never objected to the sanitary inspection of convents. The right hon. Gentleman had asserted that when complaints were made as to insanitation they were brought immediately under his notice and attention given to them, but he could assure him that in the City of Dublin that was not the case. Time after time the attention of the Sanitary Officer of the City had been drawn to the condition of the Post Office, and he had replied that he had no power to enter on Government premises. Why should not such premises be equally open to inspection with private workshops? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had met the claim of the men in anything like a fair or generous manner. The inquiry promised had reference only to the question of pay. But there were other grievances which ought to be considered, and amongst them the cases of favouritism in promotion which so often occurred. As to the character of the Committee he would like to know if, in the case of a dispute between employers and employees, any employer would agree to the matter being referred to a body of workmen outside the trade to settle? The effect of the hon. Gentleman's action would be to delay the removal of grievances, and therefore he held that the scope of the inquiry ought to be widened. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman that there was seething discontent in the Dublin Post Office, and the Lord Mayor and citizens had agreed that the officials were not well treated. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Postmaster-General.—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said that though many of them who had taken an interest in this question for many years might be disappointed at the decision arrived at by the Postmaster-General, he still thought that the Committee marked distinctly a step in advance. Hitherto there had been an obdurate refusal on the part of Postmasters-General to consider the claims brought forward by the postal establishment for an inquiry into various matters of which they complained, and although the proposed Committee might not altogether satisfy the postal clerks, he felt it would result in placing before the House a great amount of evidence which would lead to further inquiry into the conditions under which the postal service was administered. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered questions put to him in the course of the debate as to why certain classes were to be exempted from the afforded to members of the staff to present their case. Why was it that 80,000 employees were outside the scope of the inquiry. As had been suggested by the hon. Members for Battersea and Plymouth, it was not right that the investigation should be confined to the higher grades of the postal staff; it ought rather to deal with the lowly-paid classes, whose position had become a by-word in the country. It was disappointing, indeed it was almost a shame, that a class whose wages ranged from 18s. to 25s. weekly, and whose case had not been reconsidered since 1878, should be left out in the cold. There were other classes omitted, the sub-postmaster and the engineers and linemen, whose case deserved consideration. The Postmaster-General had shown he was a master of his business and not merely an ornament of the Department, but he had not that evening taken them very far along the road of reform; still the Committee will probably lead to a useful exchange of ideas. He regretted that the reduction of the Vote had been moved, because, if the Committee were composed of men of wide experience in dealing with large masses of men and a variety of interests, it would be able to ascertain if the scale of wages paid in the Post Office was in accordance with the scale generally paid in outside employment. Personally he was confident that the result of the inquiry would be to prove that the complaints made year after year were well founded. It was all very well to say that the taxpayer must be considered, but they must also remember that postal employees were the servants of a monopoly, and if they lost their appointment had little or no chance of getting similar employment elsewhere. They had entered on a new chapter of postal inquiry, and what opportunities would be history, and he hoped the result would be to largely improve their position.

MR. LOUGH said it was quite impossible in the time left to them to discuss the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, which had dealt with a question of gigantic importance, viz., the re-purchase of stamps across the Post Office counter. Perhaps there had been some pilfering, which it was desirable to stop, but in order to do that they ought not to treat as rogues every one who wished to sell stamps to the Post Office.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not suggest doing anything of the kind.

MR. LOUGH said he would deal with the matter on a later occasion.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL

(Not amended by the Standing Committee), considered; Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (PENSIONERS) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment; Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 1st May, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Salford Corporation [H.L.]. (Petition for additional provision.)

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas [H.L.]. (Petition for additional provision.)

And the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Ipswich Gas; Great Northern and City Railway; Broadstairs Gas; Bath Corporation Water; Bridgwater Gas; East Ardsley Gas; Stoke Newington Borough Council; Midland Railway; North Middlesex Gas.

And the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with—

Maidstone Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.] (Petition for additional provision); Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.] (Petition for additional provision); Maidstone Gas Bill. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill. Committee to meet on Tuesday next.

Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection that the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.], The order made yesterday appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order).

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Western Trust Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF LORDS MANUSCRIPTS.

Message from the Commons for copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series); Ordered to be communicated.

TRANSVAAL.

Papers relating to the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903 (Ordinance No. 1); Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

General Report of the proceedings of the Conservators of the River Thames during the year ended 31st December, 1902; with a statement of the accounts

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

of the Conservators for that year; Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee:

E. Ancaster,
L. Belper,
L. Lamington,
L. Monkswell,
L. Alverstone;

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

MANCHURIA.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I may perhaps supplement by a few words the statement which I made in reply to Lord Spencer last night upon the subject of the evacuation of Manchuria. I have received from the Russian Ambassador, to whom I had addressed an inquiry upon the subject, a verbal statement to the following effect:—The information which has reached the British Government as to the conditions required for the evacuation of Manchuria is not at all correct. The discussions which are proceeding at Pekin concern Manchuria alone, and have reference to certain guarantees which are indispensable for securing the most important Russian interests in the province after the withdrawal of the Russian troops. As for measures which might tend to exclude foreign Consuls or obstruct foreign commerce and the use of ports, such measures are far from entering into the intentions of the Imperial Government. They consider, on the contrary, that the development of foreign commerce is one of the main objects for which the Russian Government have undertaken the construction of lines of railway in that part of the world.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, 1st May, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill, verbal Amendment made (King's Consent signified); Bill read the third time, and passed.

Great Eastern Railway Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Great Northern Railway Bill, as amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill, read a second time, and committed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes), Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Athlone and Kingstown (two); ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes) Bill, "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districtsof Athlone and Kingstown (two);" presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]

Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill; Commercial Gas Bill; reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table.

Nelson Corporation Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

MR. NICOL reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills, That the parties promoting the Thames

Steamboat Trust Bill had stated that the evidence of Mr. William Charles Robinson, Superintendent of Thames Police, Wapping, E.; Captain C. P. Wilson, Principal Officer of the Marine Surveyors' Department, Board of Trade, 79, Mark Lane, E.C.; Mr. James W. Richardson, Senior Engineer Surveyor, Board of Trade, North Shields; Mr. James Watt, Surveyor of Marine Department, Board of Trade, 79, Mark Lane, E.C.; Mr. James H. Gough, of Moss Grange, Nether Street, North Finchley; and Mr. George Holland, Sub-inspector of Thames Police, Waterloo Pier, W.C., was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said William Charles Robinson, C. P. Wilson, James W. Richardson, James Watt, James H. Gough, and George Holland do attend the said Committee on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Mr. William Charles Robinson, Captain C. P. Wilson, Mr. James W. Richardson, Mr. James Watt, Mr. James H. Gough, and Mr. George Holland, do attend the Committee on Group D. of Private Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill, reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Leigh Corporation Bill, reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bill, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

AGED PENSIONERS (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Westhoughton (three); Fence; Aldwarke; Grayfield Pit; Waleswood; Denton; Paisley; Ashton Moss; Bowling; Motherwell; Bellshill; Ellistown; Snibston; Hightown; Wharncliff; Silkstone; Hindley (nine); Cradleye Lye; Wellshot; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Clackmannan; Alva; Devon; and Swanwick Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS BILL AND COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petition from Bath, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bathgate; and Benholme; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (REPAYMENT OF LOANS) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Elgin; Banff; and Pittenweem; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

Petitions against: from Codford; Oxford (four); Balham; Boscastle; and Gainsborough; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Birmingham and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MOTOR CARS (TAXATION).

Petition from Pembroke, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

PETROLEUM BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Petition from Battersea, against; to lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Huddersfield; and Battersea; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Rochdale; Trowbridge; Seven Kings; and Battersea; to lie upon the Table.

TIED HOUSES (ABOLITION) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TIED HOUSES (FREEING) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Westhoughton (three); Fence; Aldwarke; Grayfield Pit; Waleswood; Hindley (nine); Denton; Paisley; Ashton Moss; Bowling; Motherwell; Bellshill; Ellistown; Snibston, Hightown; Wharncliffe Silkstone; Tye; Cradley; Wellshot; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Clackmannan; Alva; Devon; and Swanwick Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

TRAMWAYS (HOURS OF LABOUR) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903 (Ordinance No. 1), or the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 6, 1903).

Copy presented, of Accession of the Republic of Guatemala to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field, 24th March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2967 to 2968 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 139.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum—Attendants' Hours.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tradesmen employed in Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum are compelled to work every second week for ninety-nine hours fifty-five minutes, and for seventy-seven and a half hours during each of the other weeks; and that they have to discharge the duties of attendant during portion of the day in addition to performing their work as tradesmen; and whether he will cause inquiry into the matter with the object of limiting their duty to the work of their respective trades and lessening their hours of labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The working hours of the tradesmen attendants at this asylum are eighty-seven and sixty-six in alternate weeks. They discharge the duties of attendant during a portion of the day in addition to performing their work as tradesmen. But no grievance arises out of this state of facts, inasmuch as they accepted their appointments subject to this condition. The matter has already been fully investigated, and it is not proposed to make any change in the conditions of their service.

Alien Immigration.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state if any, and, if so, how many, of the aliens who have in recent years emigrated from England but were rejected by the United States and the Dominion of Canada as unworthy of admission to North American soil, having been, or being, convicts, idiots, lunatics, paupers, or so diseased as likely to become a public charge, are still maintained at the expense of the British people; and, if so, whether he can take steps to prevent this being done in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have no means of answering the Question directly, but I have ascertained by inquiry from the principal shipping companies which carried the persons other than British subjects who were landed in this country in 1902, after being rejected by the United States or Canadian authorities, that the great majority of these persons were sent by them out of the United Kingdom. Out of a total of 423 aliens so landed I have definite information that at least 384 were repatriated, and probably this was also the case with several of the remaining thirty-nine who have not yet been traced.

Metropolitan Poor Law Children suffering from Ophthalmia and Ringworm.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he can state the number of Metropolitan Poor Law children at present suffering from ophthalmia and ringworm respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) It appears from returns for the week ending 4th April that there were 149 cases of ophthalmia in the district and separate Poor Law schools in the Metropolis, and 203 in the special school provided by the Metropolitan Asylums Board for the reception of ophthalmic children. The same returns show that there were 131 cases of ringworm in the district and separate schools, and 419 in the special school provided by the Asylums Board for ringworm cases. I cannot state the number of children in Metropolitan workhouses and infirmaries at present suffering from these diseases, but I am about to obtain a return on the subject.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

[SECOND READING.]

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that it was his privilege to introduce the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill to this House for its Second Reading. As hon. Members were aware, and most people in the country also, this was not the first time this subject had been presented for the consideration of Parliament, and he hoped, with a great many others, that in one sense it would be the last time, inasmuch as that he trusted facilities would be given for the passage of the measure through the House, and that it would eventually become law. He did not think that he need go into the history of the Bill very carefully or very extensively. The House had listened to a great many debates upon the subject, and a large number of exhaustive speeches had been made upon its historical and social aspects. But if the House would allow him indulgence, he would briefly refer to the course of the Bill in this House in the past. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Wolverhampton, two years ago, gave what seemed to him a very succinct, careful, and authoritative statement of that history. Perhaps, however, he might be permitted to say that the Bill had passed its Second Reading in this House fifteen times: that it had once passed the House of Lords: that it had passed a Second Reading in the House of Lords in 1896 by a majority of twenty-nine, and a Third Reading by a majority of thirty-eight. Since 1835 this Bill had been very much before the public, and had been very much before this House. They had been told in the past that although the House of Commons had given its assent to the principle of the Bill that did not necessarily represent the opinion of the country. Well, he thought that was possibly a fair argument to use were it not the case that the House of Commons, through a great many years, had approved of the principle of the Bill; that both political parties, and the Parliamentary representative leadership of both political parties, had given their assent to the principle of the Bill. During the last twenty-five years a very great change had come over the opinion of the public in this country in regard to this measure, as was evidenced in many directions. It might be perfectly just to say that, if the Bill had only passed through its Second Reading in one Parliament, that did not represent the opinion of the country; but again, and again and again the principle had been affirmed in this House, and he thought that a fair and a just conclusion from that was that this House did represent the opinion of the country in that respect. They were asked if this question had been brought prominently forward at election times. He admitted that it had not—that was not denied. But that was an admission that need not act against the opinion of the House as to this Bill. There were a great many questions which were important to a section of the public of this country which were not necessarily election topics. Again, and again and again had this House assented to the principle of justice to the minority: and if it was urged against this Bill that because only a minority asked for it it should not be received and passed into law, then he pointed to the history of the country to show that the views of the minority were acknowledged, in order that no disability or injury should be done to them, provided that no great injury was done to the general public. The argument of the minority was the last argument which should be used in this Chamber, which had affirmed again and again, that no body in the community should be injured by the laws of this country. He had said that a great change had taken place in the opinion of the country, and he would point to the fact that while twenty-five years ago scarcely a petition was presented in favour of the Bill, since then 1,000 petitions had come from Royal and Parliamentary boroughs in Scotland, 8,000 out of 9,500 Nonconformist ministers, and 480 mayors and ex-mayors of the different towns of the country, had presented petitions in its favour. There was not a newspaper in Scotland at the present time of any importance that did not advocate this Bill. There was scarcely an important newspaper in England that did not advocate it. Of the great newspapers of London alone, thirteen were for it, and only three against it. Of fifty-two weekly newspapers, forty-two were for it, and ten against. In the provinces fifty newspapers were for it, and thirteen against. In Ireland three important papers were for it, and there was no evidence of any against it. The Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland had affirmed the Bill in principle, and the Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists supported it

There was another point which he wished to impress on the House, because it belonged to all the arguments made in the past concerning the religious attitude towards the Bill. Twenty-five years ago 210 Archbishops, Bishops and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church within the metropolitan area petitioned this

House in favour of legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister, within the borders of the United Kingdom. Now, that came from the clergy of the Church—one of whose most distinguished Prelates, Cardinal Wiseman, said, in reply to a question put to him by the Royal Commission of 1847, that the marriage with a deceased wife's sister was purely a matter for ecclesiastical legislation, and was not contrary to Scripture. Cardinal Newman, whose evidence had been quoted before but might be again, also affirmed the principle so far as it dealt with the poor. That was the appeal which he made that day, and for the working classes, because they had less power in the land to get legislation passed by this House than any other section of the community, but upon whom this disability weighed more heavily than upon any other portion of the community. The argument of the action of the colonies in passing similar legislation had been used by the supporters of the Bill, but he did not wish to press that too heavily. There was a point, however, that he wished to press. The noble Lord the Member for Greenwich had, in this House, in the past, said that if the colonies injudiciously abused the principle of self-government granted to them, that was no reason why we should not legislate for ourselves. He presumed that he had the right to suggest that his noble friend meant that the colonies had abused the right of self-government.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I do not think that I used the word "abused." I think I said that they had injudiciously exercised the right of self-government.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that he left the House to form its own judgment as to what the noble Lord meant. But he wished to say that the noble Lord, and other of his supporters in this House—for the noble Lord did lead in all matters that pertained to the Church, or the particular portion of the Church to which he attached himself—wished to convey that the colonies could do as they pleased. He submitted that that liberal spirit with which his Lordship allowed the Colonies to do just as they pleased, was best represented by the lines of the poet, for whom he suspected the noble Lord had an admiration, which ran—

> "Abroad too kind, at home 'tis steadfast hate
> And the eternal tempest of debate."

He submitted that this House, taking into consideration the Imperial significance of this Bill, should pay some regard to the view of this question adopted by the colonies. They represented 12,000,000 of well-meaning, cleanly-living people of the Empire. Moreover, the Bishops of the Colonial Church, who were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and had a certain duty to that See from which their ecclesiastical dominion came, had, he was bound to say, not translated that duty into an opposition to the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. Only the other day the Synod of New South Wales affirmed the principle that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was not contrary to the Scripture, thereby bringing themselves into line with the law of the land. It had been said concerning the colonies and the United States, that marriage with a deceased wife's sister represented a somewhat low view of the marriage ceremony. He could not think so when he was reminded of the fact that it was a Roman Catholic who brought into the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill passed into law there. At the same time, he was reminded that there was no such thing as a divorce law in Canada. He was presenting that point for the reason that it had been said that the idea of passing the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill represented a lower order of religious intelligence—should he say?—and that there was less respect for the bond of matrimony in the United States than in this country. He believed that argument would not stand the test of the facts either in the colonies or the United States. He wished to say that if the United States had not accepted the code of marriage law as it was accepted in the United Kingdom, it was because the United States as well as Canada, Australia, and all the colonies had drawn a very sharp line of distinction between consanguinity and affinity. That lay at the basis of the law of the United States and the colonies. He had heard remarks made on this subject in this House regarding the United States which were extremely offensive to all people who understood what domestic life in the United States was. He was not holding a brief for the United States, but he maintained that the United States was to-day nearer to the symmetry of that old arch which had been held up for centuries as representative of the law of marriage, than England. In nineteen of the states of the United States marriage with cousins was not permitted; in forty-seven of the States marriage between aunts and nephews was prohibited; and it was in order to prejudice opinion in this country that it was said that because divorce was so easy there, the United States was extremely lax in its views of the marriage ceremony. That was not so. Divorce, in itself, was not necessarily a low idea of the bond of matrimony. They knew perfectly well that the Church of England had persistently opposed the law of divorce in this country.

He wished to say that he believed that all hon. Members who had opposed this Bill did so with absolute sincerity and from a very high standpoint. He believed that the marriage ceremony was not only the holiest but the most mystical ceremony within the exercise of men and women who had a duty to perform to their country. But he desired to say also that that view was not one which applied to the majority of the people in this nation, or to the majority of mankind, for at the present time they knew very well that in nearly all countries of Europe people might marry their deceased wife's sister. In Russia those who were not Members of the Orthodox Church might so marry, and in France by dispensation, and in nearly all Protestant countries by right of law. He believed that if the people of this country were appealed to they would by a vast majority give an affirmation to the principle of this Bill.

It had been said that working men had not made any appeal in favour of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. There was no hon. Member representing the working classes who had not again and again affirmed his belief that the Bill would be good for the working classes of this country. He had received a letter from the hon. Member who represented the railway servants regretting he could not be present, and stating that he believed that most of the working men of this country would strongly approve of the Bill being passed. The hon. Member also said that difficulties had arisen with friendly societies when working men had married their deceased wives' sisters, illegally and unlawfully, but not improperly. That represented a matter of conscience, which he believed was not held in low esteem in this House. At a Trades Congress not long ago the principle of the Bill was affirmed by a majority of over 90 per cent.

The matter had been dealt with so frequently that he would only make one further reference, and that he would make with due care and due anxiety, as a Churchman who was in sympathy with the practices and customs of the Church. He believed religion to be the basis of the morality and good living of every country. He believed that the Church should care for the welfare of the working man as sincerely as it cared for the welfare of the highest in the land. He believed that the working man desired this Bill; and if he did desire it, and as long as, for conscience sake, he married his deceased wife's sister illegally, it should be the duty of this House to see that facilities were given to him to become legally moral within the bounds of his own conscience. He believed firmly that the working man would profit by the passing of this Bill—profit morally, profit in character, and profit in public and civic spirit. He believed that the argument that the wife's sister would, as it were, sit upon the hearthstone waiting for her sister's death, was an absurd argument. It was petty; it was preposterous. What was the position of the working man? Take the case of a working man who earned 30s. a week. He has four or five children, he is at work every day, his pleasures are few, and his circle of acquaintances is small. His wife falls ill, and, if she has the good fortune to have a sister, the sister takes the place of the housekeeper, the nurse, and the housemaid for the benefit of the children. The wife dies, and the sister sacrifices herself, her opportunities, and her life for the family of her sister—not necessarily for the family of the man. The man is an honest man, he wishes to do right and to obey the law. He wishes to marry this woman, but his conscience forbids him, because his Church tells him that he must not do so. What is the result ? Consider not only the position of the man, but the position of the woman who had sacrificed herself, and the position of the children for whom she had sacrificed herself. The argument that a wife's sister would not be admitted to the home on the same basis as before, if this Bill were passed, was not a reasonable one; and he affirmed it represented a very low estimate of the character of society in this country. As a Bishop of the American Church wrote a few days ago, the English law would apparently pre-suppose a community of *intriguants* such as he believed did not exist in this country. The Church told such a man that he must not marry his deceased wife's sister, because it was against the law of God, as well as against the law of the State. That argument was good fifty years ago, but it was not good to-day, because every eminent authority in the Hebrew Church admitted that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was not forbidden in the famous verse of Leviticus, which had been often used, but which had not been heard of for a long time. There was no single ecclesiastical authority outside the Church of England who did not affirm the same thing. The revisers of the Bible, by a very large majority, affirmed that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was not forbidden in the verse to which he had referred. Indeed, that argument was not now used, because the bottom had been knocked out of it. If the bottom had fallen out of that argument, where then stood the law of 1540 which said that no marriage should be performed which was against the laws of God ?

Where in the whole Bible was marriage with a deceased wife's sister forbidden ? It was not a question of what his noble friend the Member for Greenwich called the beautiful symmetry of the marriage law through fourteen centuries. There was no beautiful symmetry, there had never been symmetry at all. Up to the time of the fourth century the marriage laws were made to meet the peculiar and particular circumstances of the time. The patriarchal system existed, and it was to deal with the natural abuses that would spring up under such a system that those marriage laws were framed. There came a very proper revulsion against those old laws; and then there ensued the ascetic principle, which they had still in the Roman Catholic Church to-day. At that time marriages up to the seventh degree were prohibited. England received a special benefit from a certain Pope Gregory that marriages within the bounds of England should be permitted up to the fourth degree. Where was the symmetry in that ? After that a certain King came to the throne who had a high office to perform so far as the Church of England was concerned, and also a personal duty, as he thought, to himself; he permitted marriages with cousins, which represented the fourth degree. Where was the symmetry there ? He did not think that the argument of the arch would stand. He could find a far better figure of speech than the keystone of the arch. If a pane of glass were taken out of a window the window or the light were not destroyed, but there was let in the air. That was what he believed this Bill would do for the benefit of a great many people in this country; and, at any rate, it would help those who had as good a right to ask for help as the rich and luxurious, and as those who stood so closely to ancient and unsound ecclesiastical customs. They were told that if this Bill were passed the drift would be towards greater laxity. That had been said of a great many reforms which affected the well-being of the people. The divorce law was passed for the relief of the greatest and most serious grievance in social life. Had the offence increased because relief had been given from torture and shame ? The hand that gave relief gave also a penalty; and he believed the land was cleaner and more wholesome because of the statutes that lightened the severity of ecclesiastical customs, which belonged to a period when a man was hanged for breaking into a house, and a woman was sent to Botany Bay for stealing a loaf to keep her child alive. The Church of England was a State

Church, and as such she had civic and political duties to perform, in keeping with the transcendent advantages of her position. She had powers, to some degree administrative, and to an incalculable degree moral. She should not be too rigid. He believed this Bill was in the interests of morality, in the interests of the poor, and in the interests of the children. He believed it was Imperial in its significance, and that it was in keeping with the modern spirit of Christianity, which broadened its sympathies, and narrowed its phylacteries every day. He believed it would conduce to domestic integrity and serve to widen the virtues of humanity.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said everybody must congratulate not only the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading but also the promoters of this Bill on the brilliant speech they had just heard, and he rejoiced to think the efforts of the hon. Member on this occasion had been so convincing. He had come to the conclusion, and everybody must agree, that a long debate upon this question was almost unnecessary. The Bill had passed its Second Reading on many occasions, and in the last two years it had passed by majorities of 157 and 125. There could be no doubt that the majority of the House was in favour of the Bill, and the practical question now was what position the advocates of the measure ought to take up to ensure its passage into law. It was neither good sense nor good business to weary the House with repetitions of arguments which had been urged over and over again, and of the answers which had been made to them. The House of Commons knew the arguments by heart, but he would give one or two illustrations. The promoters said these restrictions on marriages with a deceased wife's sister were a great injustice to our colonists, and they said it was monstrous that marriages which were lawful in the colonies under Acts to which the Royal assent had been obtained through the Privy Council should not be fully recognised in this country. And, further, that the children of such marriages should be under disabilities in regard to the inheritance of real property in this country in cases of intestacy, or that the children so born should be placed in the class of "strangers in blood" so far as the Death Duties were concerned. And that the position of the deceased wife's sister after marriage in the colony should be socially and religiously doubtful and difficult when she returns to this country. As they knew the arguments so they knew the answers that were made to them. It was said, "We are not going to allow the colonies to make laws for us. They can make their own. We will make ours. If the child suffers an injustice in regard to real property change your inheritance laws but do not touch the sanctity of marriage. It is no part of our duty to our colonists to alter our fundamental marriage laws to make things pleasant for ladies who visit this country from Australia."

LORD HUGH CECIL rose to interrupt, but

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE, declining to give way, remarked that the noble Lord was very fertile in his interruptions, and that he would have an opportunity of replying afterwards. Continuing, he said he had never been able to understand the so-called religious objections, and in that confession he was proud to find himself at one with the Prime Minister, who last year, on receiving a memorial signed by 315 Members of Parliament asking for facilities for the passage of the Bill, said—

> "I have never been able to understand the religious difficulty, though I cannot say I am surprised that it is raised."

But—if the deceased wife's sister—the sister-in-law of the husband and the aunt of the children be—as seemed to be admitted by both sides, the best guardian of the children, then from a religious point of view, surely it was far better that she should be entitled to enter into the state of marriage than that she should occupy that doubtful position, which with people in poor circumstances especially might lead to a state of concubinage. All these things had been said and the answers one way or another had been given *ad nauseam*, and, of course, there were many more. They knew them all. There was no subject on which Members of Parliament had been better educated on both sides than on this one. It might truly be urged that there is nothing more to be said on this matter. The Bill was the same as that of last year. It was the same Parliament and the same House of Commons, and no change had taken place in public opinion as represented in the House of Commons since last session. There were one or two new incidents in the history of the opposition to the Bill. One was the enthusiastic meeting at the Church House, Westminster, in October, when an important resolution was passed. Another was an appeal or a petition signed by 76,850 women all over the country, asking Members of Parliament to vote against the passing of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. The resolution passed at the meeting at the Church House was in this form:

> "That this meeting pledges itself to resist *by every legitimate means* the passing of a Deceased Wife's Sister Marriage Bill."

He congratulated the Opposition on this resolution. They would have a new sensation. This was a new departure. Henceforth this Bill was to be opposed by legitimate means. He supposed the House had not forgotten the disgraceful exhibition of February 5, 1902, a Wednesday afternoon, when this Bill was before the House for Second Reading. The noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, whose sincerity he did not in any way call into question, on that occasion made a speech which was mystical, spiritual, and almost religious. He (Sir Joseph) was much impressed by the fervour with which that speech was delivered, though he could not help thinking that it was better fitted for a pulpit than for the green benches of the House of Commons, but it was all the more perhaps, a speech, tending to lead ordinary mortals to contemplate political matters from a loftier level—a higher platform. And having got them into that mood what did the noble Lord do? He delivered what the Unionist newspaper the *Spectator* described as—

> "A foul blow against the Bill," by "sauntering and loitering in the lobbies with deliberate intent to prevent the House of Commons from dealing with the Bill until the clock finger reached the fatal hour."

LORD HUGH CECIL: Is there anything irreligious in that?

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE: The noble Lord's speech was splendid, the precepts elevating, but when it came to practice what an example of mundane trickiness for the apostle of the sanctity of marriage to set to his admiring followers! Mr. Speaker expressed his regret at the course adopted by the noble Lord—and public opinion too. And, in passing the Resolution to "resist by every legitimate means," the great meeting at the Church House registered its disapproval of the noble Lord's conduct and inferentially uttered a pious hope that it might be saved from its friends. The protest issued by 76,885 women seemed at the first blush important, but why it was necessary to go all over the country to find 76,000 protesting women was answered to-day by petitions from all over the country in favour of the Bill, including one representing 75,000 women in one district alone. In Lancashire 2,125 ladies had been induced to sign a petition against the Bill. He had taken the trouble to examine the Census Returns, and he had found that in the county of Lancashire there were 1,140,000 women over twenty years of age, while only 2,125 of these had thought it of sufficient importance to sign the petition against the Bill. In Yorkshire there were 1,500,000 women over twenty years of age. He had taken the age of twenty, because he thought it was a period at which a woman was in a position to express an opinion on a subject of this kind. Of these 1,500,000 women only 2,900 had signed petitions against the Bill. He did not think there had been any very great change in public opinion on this subject since last session; he hoped the Bill would be read a second time, and he was anxious that further facilities for its passage through Parliament should be secured. It was beaten last year, not on its merits, but by obstruction, which made further progress with it impossible, and in view of the future of the present Bill he wished once again to quote the report of what took place in an interview between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Sir H. Fowler) and the Prime Minister, when the latter was reported to have said that it might be admissible to state before the Second Reading was taken this year that the House would have an opportunity of considering the Bill on its further stages. He was very grateful to the First Lord for having made that statement, and he was one of those who intended to rely upon it, because he believed that in making such a declaration the word of the First Lord of the Treasury was as good as his bond.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton) said that in moving the rejection of the Bill he wished to say that on one point, at any rate, he was in entire agreement with the hon. and learned Gentleman who last spoke, viz., as to the spirit and tone in which the mover had brought the Bill forward. As he had to deal with old arguments he must ask the House while he was appealing to it, to pause well, even at this stage, before committing itself to the principles of a Bill which fitfully, from time to time, it had sanctioned, not, as he believed, from any strong feeling in the matter, but rather out of weariness, and out of sympathy with those who were desirous of seeing it pass. The Bill had been carried eight times in that House, and it had been rejected once during the period he had the honour of sitting in that Assembly, but the proof that it did not possess urgency was to be found in the fact that for ten years it did not appear at all on the floor of that House, namely, from 1891 to 1901. No doubt there was deep sympathy with children who were deprived of their mother. There was also deep sympathy with the husband who lost the stay of his house and the guide of his children, especially in cases where it was not possible for him to employ paid assistance. But they must be careful lest sympathy with those who deserved their sympathy in the highest degree should lead them to take a course which would endanger the sanctity of Christian marriage, the purity of the home, and the ancient Christian standard of domestic life which had stood for so many generations. These matters of marriage could not be left to instinct or convenience. There must be a law, and the question was whether this particular marriage was one which could be allowed, and whether such a relaxation could be permitted without injury to the community at large. From the earliest ages there had been a consistent and intelligent rule, understood and acted upon by the Christian Church from its very foundation, and by Christian States from their earliest establishment, and that consistent rule was founded on the central principle, enunciated four times in Holy Scriptures, that husband and wife were one flesh, and that no man could be allowed to marry any woman near akin to him, and equally he could not be allowed to marry anyone near akin to his wife, because husband and wife were one. Out of this arose the law of consanguinity and affinity. He did not wish to found any very strong argument upon that, or to bring forward in support the Jewish law, but he would point out that there was a direct prohibition which had been universally observed in the Christian Church. There was a time, no doubt, when one of the Popes—not a man of the highest morality—gave a dispensation to the King of Portugal to marry his deceased wife's sister. The Church of England, following the Roman Catholic Church, had always held that these marriages were contrary to God's law. The Presbyterian Church of England had followed on the same line, for in 1643 it most clearly described these marriages as prohibited, and very recently some thirty-four leaders of the three Presbyterian Churches endorsed that view. Again, reformers took a similar line; Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin all followed that course. When they came to the Roman Catholic Church, there was no doubt that since the time of the unfortunate incident to which he had alluded, dispensations from time to time had been granted by which such marriages were allowed, but Cardinal Manning had stated that, during the whole period of thirty years during which he had ruled over his diocese, he only knew of six cases in which these dispensations had been granted. He trusted the House would not forget the great men of modern times who had most strongly resisted these marriages. Lord Hatherley, Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Coleridge, Lord Cairns, and the Duke of Argyll were all men who had resisted the Bill again and again, because they believed its passage would be fatal to the sanctity of marriage and the happiness of domestic life. People were obliged to submit to restraint in some matters. Natural man was impatient of restraint, and much trouble had ensued because the restraint in the garden of Eden was broken through. Society had a right to limit the freedom of the individual, if that freedom was likely to be injurious to the community. Laws relating to sanitation, vaccination and infection, greatly interfered with the liberty of the subject. but they were submitted to for the public good. It was because the opponents of this Bill believed that, if passed, it would produce moral contagion that they resisted it, and asked that the restraint should continue. There was said to be a popular demand for the change. It was difficult to discover what the feeling of the people really was, but the late Lord Hatherley, twenty years ago, could find only three cases of such marriages among 60,000 people in Westminster, while only a day or two ago the incumbent of a poor parish of 10,000 in Westminster declared that he had never heard any such desire expressed by his parishioners. No one had a closer acquaintance with the condition of the poor than the present Bishop of London, but his Lordship had recently declared the alleged demand on the part of the poor to be a myth. By passing this Bill they would be running a terrible risk for a very uncertain demand. This was a case in which the desire of the minority could not be granted without inflicting a greater injustice on the majority. No new arguments had been adduced in favour of the Bill; no evidence was forthcoming of the necessity for the change, and certainly no fresh security had been provided against the dangers which had been so clearly described on other occasions. The present law made for the greatest happiness of the greatest number; it conduced to the maintenance of a high standard of Christian morality; and it was a restriction which, in the interests of the whole country, ought to be retained. He therefore begged to move "That the Bill be read a second time this day six months."

MR. GUEST (Plymouth), in seconding the Motion, said he was glad to have the opportunity of saying a few words, because he wished to explain an apparent inconsistency. A year ago, without proper consideration, he supported a similar Bill to this, but he had altered his view. It seemed to him that the promoters of this Bill paid more attention to the benefit which they thought might be conferred upon certain individuals, who were suffering from a hardship, than to the general principle which must, in his opinion, underlie the marriage laws of this country. He proposed to approach this question purely from the secular point of view. The religious arguments, with which they were all familiar, had no great weight with him, and were not responsible for the opinion which he held. Whatever might be the hardships under which certain individuals suffered on account of particular disability which existed in this respect, it was clear that those individual cases and special circumstances must be subordinated to some definite and recognised principle which should govern the marriage laws. He could conceive two principles on which the marriage laws might rest. They might take the principle of hygiene, and say that the laws of health were the only consideration which ought to govern the question of marriage. If that were so, and consanguinity was to be the test, this Bill ought to contain a clause prohibiting the marriage of first cousins. But there was a higher principle upon which the marriage law might be based, and one which embraced and transcended the principle of hygiene. It was the fusion of two families by marriage, and the prohibition within certain degrees of affinity of marriage between those fused families, and the reason the social principle seemed to him to be higher than the hygienic principle was this—the family was the unit of society and the measure of civilisation. Civilised states had made very great sacrifices to establish that fact. The narrow scope of the divorce laws testified to the great importance attached by civilised states to family life. Polygamy had been discredited by civilised states almost entirely in the interests of the children who were the future citizens of the State. Civilised society always recognised this as being the most important social unit and measure of civilisation. At one time marriage between brothers and sisters was not infrequent. Many instances of this were afforded by Egyptian history.

The question had another very important aspect, and that was the peculiar relationship that existed between brothers and sisters and sisters-in-law, which marked them off as different from all other people in the world, and which was, he thought, of very great social and moral value. This Bill proposed to narrow and limit the family which had been the outcome of ages of civilisation. If a divorce may result from intercourse with the wife's sister, all idea of incest between a man and his wife's sister must fall to the ground. Far too little attention was paid to this point. The real question was, what were the relations during the wife's life and not after her death? If it were possible to marry a deceased wife's sister, that woman must occupy a very different position to what she did at the present time. It was impossible to stop here, for if a man might marry his deceased wife's sister a woman must be able to marry her deceased husband's brother. What about the wife's niece and husband's nephew? For a few cases of hardship the Bill would destroy or alter the whole condition of family life in this country. He could not see how brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law could be on the same footing if the Bill passed. It seemed to him obvious that it introduced quite a different principle, and narrowed and limited the family circle instead of broadening it, as had been the case during the past, and would make them revert to an earlier state of civilisation. It would put back the hands of the clock, and destroy one of the best social and civilising influences which the marriage law and marriage state had produced. He should most cordially support the rejection of the Bill. Sufficient reasons had not been established why the marriage law should be altered merely to suit the convenience of a number of well-meaning persons who had been injudicious in their action.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir John Kennaway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) said he wished to say a few words in opposition to this Measure and in support of the Motion of the right hon. Baronet. He would confine himself to the question as to how this proposal affected his co-religionists, who were divided on this question. He looked at this subject from two points of view — there was the question of principle and the question of practice. Upon the question of principle they were all unanimous that the law of their Church condemned these marriages, but on the question of practice there was a difference amongst them. It was quite possible, and in very rare and exceptional cases it did happen, that the law of the Church allowed dispensations and marriages of this description, and the very fact that the law of the land did not sanction those marriages of course placed members of his religion, who were rightly allowed to contract these marriages in some few cases, at certain legal disadvantage in this country. But those cases were very rare, and the disadvantages incurred by them were still rarer. He was, of course, aware that eminent ecclesiastical authorities had been quoted in previous debates on this question. Two very learned ecclesiastics of his Church, the late Cardinal Wiseman and the late Cardinal Newman, had been quoted as favourable to a change of the law in this respect. He wished to point out, however, that they could never be quoted, so far as he was aware, as being favourable to the principle of allowing these marriages, and their opinion was given some time ago, when things were very different to what they were now. His Church had had an unhappy experience since then. There had been a change in the law of other countries with regard to this question, where the law of the land had not been kept in accordance with the law of the Church, and the result had been that there was a growing feeling entertained amongst ecclesiastics and laymen in his Church not in favour of the proposed change, but in favour of maintaining the law as it was at present in this country. It was quite true that in some very few cases hardship might be incurred, but in his humble opinion the principle of this question was so strong and so very important that he believed that those few people ought to suffer in order to safeguard the principle.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said it was always a difficult and unpleasant task to rise in the House of Commons in opposition to a wave of public feeling, as indicated by the serried ranks on the opposite Benches. Much reference had been made to the opinion of the working classes upon the subject. He had represented a purely working-class constituency for the last fifteen or sixteen years—more than that—and he did not think he had ever been asked a question at a public meeting about this Bill, or in private, except by a wealthy gentleman who had, in spite of the law, married his sister in-law. There was a laxity of public feeling perhaps which had given a partial success to the measure. Great weight had always been attached by the advocates of this Bill in the House to the state of the law in the colonies, and it was argued that the law in one part of the Empire should be made equal to that in another. He remembered the beginning of colonial legislation on this subject. It was soon after he went out as Governor of South Australia that a change in the law was agitated there, because, of course, the colonial law previously followed on the lines of the English law. South Australia was selected for this agitation because it was more composed of Nonconformists than any other colony. More than that, the temper of the legislation there was impatient of restrictions, and it was only necessary to tell the people that the doctrines of the Church and Churches were against the change in order to create considerable feeling in its favour. Accordingly, after an agitation in that colony, the Legislature passed the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. It was disallowed at home as being inconsistent with the law of the mother country. At last, there being in office in this country a Secretary of State for the Colonies who favoured this change in the law, the Royal Assent was given to it. For some years that was the only one of the Australian colonies where marriage with a deceased wife's sister was lawful. People in the other colonies used to come over to South Australia to reside there for the time required by law and then enter into these bonds. For many years there was only one clergyman of the Church of England in that colony who would celebrate these marriages, and he was a gentleman of no very high repute; and he was tempted by the £5 note which was payable for performing this sacred ceremony. The Presbyterians and other denominations in that colony, whose standards of religion stood in the way of such marriages, would not celebrate them any more. The Church of England was stronger in the colony than it used to be. He supposed that the clergy now numbered sixty or seventy instead of one, and he was able to state that there was not a single clergyman of the Church of England who would consent to perform these marriages, although the civil law permitted them. In the other colonies, no doubt a similar law had been passed, but he did not think these marriages were at all common there—in fact they were no more common than in this country.

In his own experience in this country he had not found any very strong feeling among the working classes in favour of this measure, and certainly in Scotland, a country with which he was very closely connected, there was no disposition to have these marriages. They were distinctly against the Church law of all denominations of Presbyterians in Scotland, just as they were against the law of the Church of England. He was an old man now, and he had sat in this House, off and on, for many years, and this subject was very much in the same position as when he entered. He was not sure but that there was a little more excitement about it in 1854 than now. Certainly the passing of the Act of 1836 unsettled the question a good deal. In the last two or three years it had gained considerable strength, partly, he thought, through the looseness and indifference which reigned in some quarters. It was certainly not from enthusiasm on the subject.

His hon. friend the Member for Plymouth made a very thoughtful and interesting speech which, as all who knew him would admit, was the result of profound conviction. The hon. Member was not ashamed to say that he was going to change his vote on this subject. He had referred to the disturbance which might be caused in family life if these marriages were made lawful. This was a matter that was very often referred to, and he would state what was very strongly present to his own mind. All one's life one had been accustomed to see wives' sisters in the family treated just as sisters. The wife had no cause for jealousy or disturbance, and she saw her sisters treated by her husband in exactly the same way as he would treat his own sisters, without embarrassment or difficulty or cause for difficulty. The household relations would be greatly changed if the sister became as marriageable, in the case of her husband becoming a widower, as any other girl in the country. He confessed that it did seem to him that the relations would be so changed that English family life would not be what it had been. He had himself seen instances in the higher, the middle, and the lower ranks where the wife was dying and the sister had come to take charge of the children. It was an insult for her fellow-countrymen to say that that woman could not take care of her sister's children in such circumstances without something being said against her character. He could not for the life of him see why people who paid respect to the proscriptions of the law of the Church should not be as safe from scandal as if the man's own sister had come to take charge of the children. Reference had been made to the small number of petitions which had come from Lancashire and Yorkshire against the Bill, but he would ask how many petitions had come from those counties in favour of it? He had not looked at the report on petitions lately, but he knew that in former years there never was any great number of petitions in favour of a change of the law in this matter. He was not sure but that the number of petitions against the Bill was greater than those in favour of it. He believed that the great mass of the people in those counties, as in England generally, were so content with the present law that they did not agitate either for or against it.

His hon. friend had referred to a point which had always been present to his mind and never more so than at present, namely, the absurdity, inconsistency, and hollowness of bringing forward a measure to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister while leaving the law untouched with regard to all other marriages of affinity. What reason could there be for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister while the law made it illegal to marry the wife's aunt? If such marriages were still to remain illegal when they legalised marriage with a deceased wife's sister, did it not show that there was something in the affinity which rendered such alliances inexpedient and that it was the indulgence of the weakness of the flesh, or some such motive, that induced people to wish to legalise these marriages. It was absolutely against our legislation if Parliament was going to interfere with the prohibition which had so long existed against marriages of affinity. Although the House had on many occasions passed the Second Reading of this measure it was quite evident that the wave of public opinion had not been strong enough to carry it further, therefore it would be absurd to say that there was a widespread feeling against the prohibition of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. If there had been such a feeling this House would have insisted on carrying the measure further. The resources of civilisation and of Parliament were not so weak that a measure demanded by the force of public opinion would not be carried into law, no matter how vigorous the opposition by a few. It was also absurd to say that those who opposed the measure did so on account of ritualism, or such things as that. Presbyterians were quite as strongly against it as Episcopalians, and Low Churchmen were as much against it as High Churchmen. The speakers in this debate would give a sufficient answer to such a statement. He did not think the hon. Member for Plymouth was much connected with the High Church party. But the fact was there was an old-fashioned attachment to the ecclesiastical and civil law, a desire to keep married life pure in this country, to preserve family life, and to avoid the dangers which undoubtedly would follow upon a relaxation of the law in this particular.

MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said he was as anxious as anyone to maintain the purity and sanctity of married life in this country. All the same, it seemed to him that it was quite time that the stigma which was placed upon a considerable number of our fellow-countrymen and countrywomen by the existing state of the law should be removed. He was convinced that there was substantially but one opinion among the masses of the people of this country, and that was in favour of the Bill. Why the demonstrations in favour of the Bill were not greater, and why a wave of popular feeling did not carry it to a successful issue seemed to his mind to be pretty plain. The public had seen the Bill carried to a Second Reading so often that they were satisfied that that majority would eventually secure what was wanted, and that the House would be induced to pass the Bill into the law of the land. Artificial barriers had been raised to that passage. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill referred to the change which had come over the minds of the people on this subject. His mind had not changed, but while he listened to the arguments in the debate twelve months ago, he was not very much impressed by the preaching against the Bill, although he was very much impressed by the tactics adopted by its opponents to defeat it. He then determined to do everything in his power to assist in passing this Bill into law. Whatever might be said, this was not a question that concerned so much the Members of this House as the people who were living in crowds in our cities, and with whom the idea of marriage was liable to be lowered, to be debased, by the steady resistance of this House to what they regarded as a very necessary reform. He was a member of a Church which had not yet been represented in the debate. Some Churches, like the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, were divided in their theory and practice on this subject, but there was little or no division in the Church to which he belonged, which was part of Christendom, and which had a great number of adherents in this country, America, and Australia. That Church had no law against marriage with a deceased wife's sister. One of the most eloquent preachers in that Church was obliged to leave this country because of the existing law and go to one of our colonies where he could marry his deceased wife's sister without giving any offence to his co-religionists. He thought it was a very wrong thing that we should place a stigma on people and Churchmen who held the same faith as ourselves in essentials, but not the theory held by a small and narrow section of the Church of England. It struck him forcibly that that particular section in the Anglican Church most opposed to this Bill was very largely composed of men who were opposed also to the Church Discipline Bill. He supposed that their action was on the principle to—

> "Compound for sins they are inclin'd to
> By damning those they have no mind to."

The opponents of the measure had sent him extracts from the Book of Leviticus, both in Hebrew and in English. He did not understand Hebrew, but so far as he could read the English version of Leviticus there was nothing against marriage with a deceased wife's sister, but much in its favour. He begged to give his most hearty support to the Bill.

* MR. W. E. SHARPE (Kensington, N.) said he rose with some feeling of regret to address the House in view of the speech of his hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill. It was, to his mind, a very sad and regrettable circumstance that the younger Members on this side of the House, while he did not question their feeling of loyalty and political affection as regarded great constitutional questions, were many of them, like his hon. friend, unsound on Church questions. The Church was, in his opinion, at the root of the question before the House. It was not merely a question of altering the law or of meeting the wishes of particular persons who were injuriously affected by the existing law. It was, to his mind, thoroughly and entirely at the present moment a social question. They had heard repeatedly in this House religious and biblical views and

arguments. He himself had mentioned some of them on former occasions; but he would not trouble the House on the present occasion with any remarks of that kind. The House should, however, dwell upon the fact that the change proposed by this Bill was one that went to the very root of society. It was a proposal to change one of the fundamental laws of the realm, which ought not to be changed. The point to which he particularly wished to address himself was that this was a great change which had never been called for by a majority of the people—far from it—which had never been called for by the women of England or by the poor of England, but which was the result of deliberate and determined persistency on the part of a powerful faction which a generation ago brought forward this proposal because some of the great of the land had themselves broken the law. The question was now a social one of a far-reaching character; and, speaking as he did as a Tory and a High Churchman, he wished to impress upon the House the fact that there was a strong feeling, both in the country and in the Church in particular, that there should be no attempt to alter the relations which existed in such a matter between the Church and the State. This Bill, if it were carried, would not only alter the relations of affinity and permanently abolish the relation of sister-in-law, but would establish a change in the law which had never been adopted, and was not likely to be adopted, by the Church of England. The Church of England inherited the traditions of the great churches from the time of the Apostles, and had continued to surround and safeguard holy matrimony in a way which commended itself to all branches of the Church; and they had had to-day testimony, not only from such a Low Churchman as his right hon. friend the Member for Devonshire, but from a Roman Catholic Member who was an ornament to the Church to which he belonged, namely, the noble Lord the Member for Chichester. Those were the men who took this question out of the category of party politics, and raised it to a position of a great fundamental principle, which he contended should be safeguarded and maintained by this House. As long as they had an Established Church—and he believed they would have it for ages to come—in spite of the efforts of political dissenters, they should stand by the Church, and not allow such friction to be introduced as would follow if certain marriages were allowed by the State and were not allowed by the Church. The Church in all her assemblies had declared against any such change, and the result of passing this Bill would be to establish a feeling of friction between the Church and the State. The gravity of that was so great that he wished to impress it strongly on the minds of hon. Gentlemen, and especially on the minds of hon. Members who, because of Liberal proclivities, or theoretical objections, or for the promotion of what they called liberty, were prepared to take away restrictions and safeguards which the wisdom of their ancestors put on the action of the individual. The House would do well to pause before it did anything of that kind, and he hoped that the result would show that there were a large number of hon. Members in this House who would stand by the Church of England in her old marriage laws. He hoped the House would not give way to the cry for this Bill, which he believed was not well founded, but was merely a cry of interested persons, and particularly of persons whose only claim on the House was that they had broken the law. It was not a poor man's question or a woman's question. He knew of no lady who approved of the proposal in the Bill. There were millions of women in England whose relations would be entirely changed if this Bill were passed. They were qualified to speak, and in many cases they had spoken all the more eloquently by refusing to join in an agitation in favour of so-called liberty. He asked the House to pause before it passed the Second Reading of the Bill.

Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said he did not think he would have intervened in the debate, particularly having regard to the somewhat depressing conditions as regarded attendance under which it was carried on, if he did not feel that the House was dealing with one of the most important of social problems. He wished to enter his protest against the conditions under which one of the most important topics that could be considered was being discussed. There were very few hon. Members present to discuss such a very great question, although he presumed that by-and-bye other hon. Members would turn up for the purpose of voting, possibly in favour of the Bill. He intended to approach the question much from the same point of view as the hon. Member who introduced the Bill. He did not think that any question of Divine law was at issue, so far as he was concerned. If there had been any question of Divine law, and if one thought that the matter was dealt with by Divine law, it would be no longer before the House. But he did not take that view of the question, and he was prepared to consider it on other grounds. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill said that he did not want to discuss the matter as a Church question, and he thought it ought to be looked upon from the wider point of view.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER: If it were not a question of Divine law.

MR. CRIPPS said that if it were a question of Divine law there would be no further matter for argument; but it would be a great mistake on a question of this kind to seek to raise opposition between various religious bodies, whether they were Nonconformists or members of the Church of England. He wished to argue the question partly on religious grounds—much wider than any question of Church or sect—and partly on social grounds. There was one statement of the hon. Member which he was very much astonished to hear. The hon. Member laid it down that any individual who sought liberty of this kind was to be allowed it, quite irrespective of the social and other considerations which must necessarily arise. But the question was how far the individual liberty of any individual must necessarily be restricted by the social organisation with which he happens to be connected; and whether the social organisation as it existed in Christian countries was such that this restriction ought to be placed upon the individual, in order to get the maximum of social purity and morality in every-day life. Was this alteration, which had been brought forward in this House several times, likely to conduce to an improvement in the purity and morality of ordinary social and domestic life? He held strongly the view that the question must be answered in the negative; and it was because he held that view that he was certainly opposed to the attempt to alter the marriage laws of this country in a direction leading to decadence as regarded domestic purity and morality. The hon. Member introduced a question which was generally introduced when prejudice rather than argument was wanted. He referred to it as a working class question. He would really ask hon. Members to assume that on questions of morality and purity they did not have class distinctions, any more than they had class distinctions on questions of religion; and he must say it was a nauseating argument upon a great question of this kind to attempt to separate purity and morality as though they depended on class considerations. In order to show why he was opposed to the acceptance of the Bill, he wished to go into one or two matters of history, as otherwise misapprehension might arise from certain statements made by the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading. He was aware that the historical aspect of the question had been dealt with on previous occasions, not always accurately to his mind; but if they were really in earnest on a question of this kind they must deal with it as a whole, or otherwise they would not be able to put as strongly as they would desire the case against the Bill. The great change in the marriage law was made by Lord Lyndhurst's Bill in 1835. Very few had ever been found to justify the conditions under which that Bill was passed; but, whatever the conditions were, it was certainly hoped it would have some finality on the question they were now considering. As the House was aware, up to that time those marriages only were voidable. At the time of James I. the civil courts intervened, and said that there was a strong objection to declaring marriages voidable and void after the death of the parties, and that they would not allow it. After that time the ecclesiastical Courts could only declare a marriage void in the lifetime of the parties. That was also the law in Ireland; but the law in Scotland was different, as there was no distinction between void and voidable, which he thought was a most unhappy arrangement. Whatever might be the conditions under which the Act of 1835 was passed, those marriages, since then, had been void in this country. That was a very important point to his mind. Social customs grew up with the marriage laws, and ideas of social purity and social morality were very closely connected with them. Indeed, so much did purity and morality depend upon the marriage laws that they ought not to be altered without a very strong case being shown. Nothing could be more unfortunate than the tendency to tamper with the marriage laws of a country. He spoke as one having considerable experience in dealing with marriage questions in this country at the present time, and if they looked at the conditions in this country, or at the history of other countries, they ought to lay down this principle, and it was a most important one, that without something like an overwhelming case they ought to leave the marriage laws alone, because on them so much depended social custom, and social purity and morality.

The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading referred to the hardships which existed in many cases. With many of those cases he himself had the greatest sympathy. But the hon. Member brought forward nothing to show the necessity for a great social change of this kind, nor did the condition of the House bear testimony to the fact that there was anything like a wide or general interest, in a change in one of the fundamental laws on which the social structure of the country depended. There were two statements made by the hon. Member which did not contain all the facts. In Catholic countries on the Continent at the present time those marriages were looked upon as contrary to the laws of the Catholic Church. But, although they were contrary to the laws of the Catholic Church, dispensations were allowed. He did not wish to say anything that would injure the feelings of any Catholic, but, speaking on it as a matter of law, he was bound to admit that to have a law, and, at the same time, to have the power of dispensation on a question of this kind, was very unsatisfactory. He thought the marriage law ought to be maintained, and he deprecated most strongly any marriage law which was open to be dispensed with in particular cases, as such a power would possibly act in a different manner as between the wealthy and the poor classes. From that point of view, he was strongly opposed to the Catholic doctrine, namely, a law of the Church capable of being dispensed with on particular occasions. He also gathered that the hon. Member quoted Russia in favour of his proposition; but so far as the Orthodox Church in Russia was concerned, those marriages were absolutely prohibited. The hon. Member said that the Non-orthodox Russians had the power to enter into those marriages. That was perfectly true; and therefore, when the hon. Gentleman quoted Russia in his favour, he thought the facts were all the other way. He did not want to put the matter very much on ecclesiastical grounds, still less on the ground of Divine law. But he wished to point out that in Christian countries, almost without exception, one view had been taken by the Christian Churches of all denominations on this question. As regarded most of the Protestant countries on the continent the law was as it used to be in this country. With reference to America, there was no American law as to marriage at all. There they had State law instead of United States law; and it was most detrimental. The hon. Member seemed to think that if one criticised the law of a country he was casting some reflection on the people of that country; but it was quite open to anyone to criticise the American law with reference to marriage. There was a system of rules and regulations in the different States with regard to marriage and divorce; it was a most unfortunate system, and he hoped it would never be even suggested in this country. Did the law at the present time, as regarded the deceased wife's sister, conduce to the purity and morality of our social life, or was it likely to have the contrary tendency and produce those effects after the death of the wife, and when the deceased wife's sister lived with the husband, which they all must deplore if true. In the general view they must consider all the conditions and must not mix up affinity with consanguinity. He thought in the vast majority of cases the present law tended towards the morality and purity of domestic life, and that as far as possible the sister-in-law was regarded as a sister. The question had been argued far too much upon the conditions which might arise on the death of the wife, but the House must bear in mind that that was an exceptional condition of things as regards social purity and morality, and that there were thousands of homes in this country where the sister-in-law lived in the position of sister, and where no such question as that which arose under this Bill would ever arise at all. Let them consider. On one side there was the whole domestic life of the country settled on social custom in the direction of purity and morality and the other where the conditions of hardship were exceptional conditions which ought not to override that state of things.

Another matter which had to be considered was that with questions of this sort hon. Members supporting the Bill took a particular instance and thought they had proved a case against the existing conditions merely because they had that instance. Whatever system of marriage law existed, it would be always possible to point out particular instances where the restrictions worked harshly, and if we were to upset our whole domestic relationship because of a particular case of that kind, one could bring forward arguments every month, every day, and every hour, for upsetting the law, which of all should be most sacred—the marriage law of England. On the other side it was said there were cases where the disability as regards marriage with the deceased wife's sister had brought about conditions of immorality which were exceedingly deplorable. Although there were a certain number of cases, there was no evidence whatever that they were of any very great extent having regard to our social organisation at the present time. No evidence had been advanced upon this point of any weight since the Royal Commission of 1847, and he had never heard an argument sufficiently strong to justify any change in the marriage law. Until some greater interest was shown in this question than was apparent from the thin attendance of the House, he earnestly hoped that nothing would be done to upset the marriage law as it existed at the present time. This was a question which reached down deep to the roots of our religious and social life. The House ought not to allow a Bill of this kind to go forward until it had been shown—first, that the existing conditions were such as did not conduce in the highest measure to the purity and morality of our domestic life, and, second, that evils existed which needed to be remedied. No reasons of the kind had been shown to justify such an alteration of the marriage law as that claimed for in the Bill.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said that he always listened to the speeches of the hon. and learned Gentleman with pleasure for the learning they displayed, but he was disappointed in the speech that had just been made. The hon. and learned Gentleman put the proposition before the House—that religion was vitally interested in the question. How was religion vitally interested? What was the meaning of a proposition of that kind, urged in opposition to a Bill which simply asked that certain citizens of this country should have the right to marry certain other citizens. It might be that a large number of persons with a strong religious turn of mind, not only belonging to the Church of England, but to the Nonconforming communion as well, might object on conscientious and religious grounds to this proposed change in the law, but that did not justify the proposition of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The interests of religion, if religion meant anything real, could not be affected by any change in the law of the State. In deciding this question he had done, what he always had done since he had been a Member of this House. He had approached the question as a citizen of no mean city and as a subject of the British Empire. Marriage with the deceased wife's sister was not permitted by the law. He could imagine some people saying it would be a foolish thing to do, but that is not the question before the House. He could imagine men saying it was a wrong and irreligious thing to do, but that was not the question before the House. It was, as he thought, a question of freedom—a part of that large freedom and religious equality which we had had in this country for three centuries past. What were the reasons upon which a man might reasonably object to the alteration of the law. It was a most difficult thing to argue with those who did not agree to one's first principles. The first principles of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite were not his first principles. The hon. and learned Gentleman was too adroit an advocate to put the matter in the plain and simple form in which he was now trying to put it. The hon. and learned Gentleman in a court of justice would not be allowed to draw a red herring across the trail in this matter and obscure the real issue. The hon. Member for Devonshire brought forward for discussion this simple question, whether a subject of the British Empire should or should not have a right to do something. The hon. and learned Member in his objections to the Bill went back for his authority to the Garden of Eden, but was not very successful in so doing, because the practice then was somewhat different to the ideals of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. The hon. and learned Member advanced the theory of relationship between the Church and the State, which he denied; for without reference to any religious or ethical theory the question was narrowed down to the simple one, "Has a man the right in the United Kingdom to marry his deceased wife's sister?" A great deal of learned lumber had been brought before the House by opponents of this Bill, a great deal of which was incorrect. The hon. Member for Gravesend had stated that in early days these marriages were allowed, and he could not see why they should not be allowed now. He would not go back to the Levitical doctrine. The verse in Leviticus did not forbid them, and apart from the wrong construction which had been put upon that verse of Leviticus there was nothing in the early records of Christianity until we came to the sixth century, which suggested that marriage with the deceased wife's sister should be prohibited. He believed the first prohibition was made by an Imperial edict in Rome in the year 135, some time after the Emperor Constantine, prohibiting these marriages within the area of the Roman Empire. But that was an Imperial question; there was nothing to show that the Christian Church either approved or disapproved of it.

LORD HUGH CECIL: Surely the hon. Gentleman must be aware it is one of the old principles of Roman law.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: The noble Lord approached the question as a biassed man, he himself was absolutely unbiassed.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Why?

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: Because he approached the question simply as a lawyer and a citizen of the Empire. He had not his references with him, but, unlike the noble Lord, it was his duty, and his painful duty, before he was called to the Bar to study Roman law, and he had read it, he hoped, not without benefit to himself. His argument was that all this kind of contention was irrelevant, and therefore it should not be forced upon the House. What did he care, as a Member for the Swansea District, about the Emperor Honorius, who did, by the way, marry the daughter of his most distinguished general. Speaking from recollection he believed it was in the sixth century that the first council of the Church prohibited these unions. He put the case definitively on this ground—Why should not a man have the right to marry his deceased wife's sister if he wished to do so? It might be a peculiar case, but why should he not have the right? The Church, he believed, did not approve of second marriages at all, but as a Member of this House he did not care what the Church might think. He looked at the proposition from one point of view only, and that was in the interest of the State; if it could be shown that this vitally affected the country to which they all belonged, then he would listen to those representations, but as, whatever might be the arguments with regard to consanguinity, there could be nothing deteriorating to the race through connection with a stranger in blood he urged the House to pass the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL said the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down had stated the case from a purely secular point of view, with an eloquence and force which it was easy to see had left a strong impression upon the House. He reached the climax of his speech when he asked that great old question—"Why should not a man marry his deceased wife's sister if he chose to?" The reason was that it was against the law, which was, after all, a point of view which the hon. Member, as a lawyer, ought not altogether to overlook.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES said he was urging that the law should be altered.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL asked whether the hon. Member proposed to promote a Bill for the alteration of the law, which was not retrospective in its action. This was a subject upon which he was reluctant to intervene, because it placed him in opposition to the hon. Member for Gravesend, with whom, on other questions and upon other subjects he had found himself in kindly co-operation. He could only regret that his hon. friend had not confined his reforming zeal to the state of the British Army, but had extended it beyond that to Christian morals. Had he confined himself to that all would have been well, but he had jumped from that into this question of social morality.

*Sir GILBERT PARKER: Does the hon. Member consider me ineligible to discuss the question of morality in this House? Nothing that I have said could justify such an inference as that.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: For three generations his family had voted and spoken against this proposal, mainly on secular grounds. There were strong feelings on both sides of the question; but the fate of the Bill would be decided, not by those who felt strongly, but by those who did not care a row of buttons about the subject, and who only saw in the question a convenient opportunity for having a slap at the Church party. For a considerable portion of the sitting of the House it was absolutely empty, but as the time reached the hour of about 4.15 Members would begin to come in, and the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton would rise in his place, and, with all the rhetoric at his command, make a most eloquent appeal in support of the Bill, and, while the House was still under the influence of that speech hon. Members would go into the Lobby and vote for the Bill, and so add to it another majority upon which to base its claim to be allowed to pass this House, when, he believed, a similar Bill brought in by the Government would never be able to get through owing to the opposition to which it would be subjected. From a secular point of view it seemed to him that the advocates of the Bill had put forward two plain secular arguments of a practical character. First of all there was the hard case of the illegitimacy of the children, and secondly there was the discrepancy between our practice and that of our colonies, which had been dwelt upon by hon. Members.

First of all there was the case of the illegitimate children. The question of civil illegitimacy was not before the House, but it was a difficult and serious point on which modern opinion might arrive at a different or less severe decision than former generations had done. The only conceivable claim it could have on the attention of the House was the claim of the children to have a fair start in life. Every argument before the House dealt with the colonial practice. His hon. friend, the Member for Pembroke, had brought in a Bill providing that any marriage contracted in any part of the British Empire, which was lawful in the country of domicile, should be recognised as lawful in any part of the British Empire. Why had progress not been made with that Bill? It had not been opposed by the Church party, which was fully prepared to acquiesce in the passage of such a measure. But however good it might be for the colonies it would not deal with those urgent and pressing evils at home which led to the presentation of the measure then before the House of Commons. He confessed he could not help thinking there was something rather hypocritical about tactics which tried to parade the claims of the children as an excuse for the acts of the parents, and about tactics which tried to use the modern sentiment of Imperialism as a means whereby an Act of retrospective indemnity was to be extracted for the people in this country who had broken the law. He assumed that hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House would admit that all marriage in civilised society must rest upon some general principle. That principle had hitherto been supplied by the Church, There was a table of kindred and affinity which embodied that principle, upon which for a long time we had conducted our affairs. That principle, as he understood it, was that when a man and woman were married they became one, and that any person the man could not marry by reason of consanguinity to himself, he could also not marry if similarly related to his wife. That might be a good or a bad principle; still it was a clear principle, a principle which had received the sanction of tradition and custom. It was a principle which very nearly approximated to the laws of health and science, and it was a principle expressed in a form easily to be understanded of the people. Now to that principle it was proposed to make an exception. The Table contained sixty degrees of kindred and affinity, and one degree was to be excepted—the deceased wife's sister. That was not, perhaps, a very considerable alteration at first sight, but still it destroyed the whole symmetry of the principle; and it overturned the sanction on which the principle rested. That was a considerable responsibility for anyone to incur. What principle had they to put in the place of the system they were overturning? He was not a very ecclesiastical person; indeed his education had lain in other directions, but he had met a very great number of people who had acquainted him clearly with what was the secular view of the subject. There was a good deal to be said for that secular view. It was a very simple view. They simply said that affinity was all humbug, and that the laws of health were good enough. If marriage were healthy then no one had the right to prevent it, and if it were unhealthy no sanction could make it tolerable. That was a logical view, and he was not prepared to say it was not a practical view. It was not, however, the view of the majority of those who supported the Bill. That was proved by the fact that they had repeatedly refused to make the Bill general in its application, or to extend it to other degrees.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: Nobody wants that.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said people no doubt shrank very much from pushing their views to their logical conclusion. After all, if they were not to have the sanction of religion and immemorial tradition to their marriage law, let them at any rate have that of science, and let them see that their system of Christian marriage was brought thoroughly up to date. It was not only the Table of Affinity which would come under modern review, but the Table of Kindred would also have to be dealt with. Royal Commissions have already considered the subject, and they would have to ask for another. No doubt, in this case it would be better to appoint somebody outside the House of Commons — a Commission composed partly of doctors and partly of business men to investigate the delicate subject of Christian morality and sexual relations. That was a point of view from which many of those who intended to vote for the Bill would recoil. They were not prepared to put it boldly forward. Their point of view, which was more illogical, was the view of a purely materialistic school. They did not say—"Let us substitute for the principle of religion the principle of health." No, they said—"Let us have the principle of religion, and where it is inconvenient let us modify it according to our inclinations." He asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Swansea why in one case only out of sixty the Table should be modified. The reply was that it should be done on the ground of freedom and liberty. That was to absolutely substitute for the restrictions which canonical morality had hitherto imposed on the will of the people, the desire of any particular generation of men—absolutely to place the foundation of Christian morality and family life on the shifting sands of popular caprice. It was a peculiarity of this law-abiding country that they had a great respect for the laws of the land, and a great dislike for those who sought to put them in disrepute, and for that very reason many hon. Members on that side of the House had a general objection to retrospective legislation. It seemed an utterly irrational argument to put forward, that because a law was broken therefore it should be changed. What position did they put the State in when they invited it to solemnly declare that it had been wrong all these years, and that those who had broken the law had been right? That the lawbreakers were, in fact, the leaders of a movement for social reform, and that in the future the law was to be altered, not in accordance with the precedents of the past, but in accordance with the views and desires of the present. This was an age of expediency, an age when principles were not popular, an age when general propositions were despised. No doubt, from that fact the Bill would be supported that afternoon, but there were some of them on that side of the House who set value and store upon great principles, and would be prepared to oppose legislation which did not seek to modify principle on the ground of principle, but which sought only to modify it on the ground of indulgence pressed for for a considerable number of years by very wealthy people. When a great principle was sought to be destroyed or impaired it was dangerous for the House of Commons to be asked deliberately to adopt the line of least resistance as the path on which society was to travel. He believed that, they would vote on that occasion with confidence against the measure, and give it their steadfast and unflinching opposition.

*MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said this subject had been thoroughly threshed out year after year, and he would have thought it was almost impossible to adduce any fresh arguments for or against, but that his hon. and learned friend the Member for the Swansea District, to whom the House had listened with interest and pleasure, had contributed a considerable amount of freshness to that discussion. He personally had simply risen in order to bring before the House an instance of especial hardship arising out of the disability imposed by the law on the poor people of this country. He would read a letter which he had received:—

> "Sir, I write to you on behalf of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, begging you to help all you can in its behalf. You are our elected Member for our Division, and I am one out of a dozen in a very small space of it, and I know of a great many more surrounding it that are in the unlawful and awkward position. I know of a great many that are looking forward to the time when they can call themselves man and wife, and their children being able to claim their parent's and father's name. I am one myself that lost my wife some years since, and was left with a small family. Her sister, then married, took them and reared them. She is now a widow with a small family. Would it not be a right thing for me to marry her and assist her with her little family? She has done all for mine, and they call her mother, as they were only a few months old, and it would make us all comfortable, and there are a great many more in the same position. We beg of you to help us both for peace and comfort for them and their families."

Everyone, he thought, would admit that this was entirely a poor man's question. Did anyone contend for a moment that the fact that the law said that this woman stood in the relation of the man's deceased wife's sister, made it possible for her to go into the same house with him and take care of his children, and for him at the same time to make a home for her and her children? Could it be suggested that in this matter there was equality between the rich and the poor? To the rich with large houses and other relations available it might be possible, though, even then, hardly advisable. To the poor in the humble cottage, with its two or three rooms, it was not possible, except with the inevitable result of either marriage or concubinage. If they took the historical aspect of the question, they would see that there was no case against the Bill. The hon. Member for Oldham had spoken of an inquiry into these Acts, and had seemed rather to ignore any previous inquiry. Now, a Commission sat in 1847 and was composed of men of the highest repute and position.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I never objected to any inquiry into the present state of the law; I only suggested that, if it was proposed to substitute the law of health for the present law then it would be necessary to institute a Commission in order to ascertain how such a law could be applied.

*MR. TOMKINSON said the Commission certainly did not report in favour of the present law. Its Report contained a *resumé* of the history of the law, and pointed out that it was not until after Henry VIII had divorced Catherine that the Ecclesiastical Courts dealt with those marriages by pronouncing them null and void. It was in the year 1835 that a great family used its private interest in this matter, with a view to getting rid of a special disability, and if there ever was a law passed in the interest of one great family which inflicted a hardship upon the majority of the people the present law as to the deceased wife's sister was one. He hoped that the House would bring the law into consonance with the feeling of the people, for it should be remembered that, *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.*

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said he could not help commenting upon the extraordinary character of the debate they had had that afternoon. They had before them what was supposed to be a very popular question, a question in which, to judge from the last speaker, the poor people of this country were especially interested, and a question on which a large majority of the Members of the House were said to be determined to get an alteration of the law. Yet it had been debated in the smallest House that had ever been seen, even on a private Member's day. During the greater part of the afternoon there had not been twenty members present; the front Opposition Bench, which was particularly supposed to support the measure, had been generally empty, while on the Government Bench the solitary occupant was the Solicitor-General, who, he believed, was opposed to the Bill. He never heard a more hollow fraud than the pretence that it was a popular measure, demanded by a great majority of the people, and especially by the poorer classes of this country. He had been a Member of that House for eleven years. During that period every question in which his constituents had felt the slightest interest had been forced upon his attention by them, but he had never had one single constituent, male or female, write to him in connection with this Bill. He believed there was absolute indifference in the country in regard to it. The poor people did not care twopence about it, for it was a case in which only a certain number of highly placed well-to-do lawbreakers came to that House year after year in order to try and get their conduct white-washed. He was not inclined to make such an exception for the benefit of a few law breakers. The hon. Member who last spoke, and who had shown how little interest he took in the subject by at once leaving the House, had contended that this was a poor people's question. He did not believe the poor in this country cared in the least about it. He had never heard of any petition coming from them and he had never seen any evidence of interest on their part in it. He would like to remind them that the only authentic inquiry which had been held into this matter was that made by the Royal Commission in 1847, and that Commission found that, during the twelve years which had succeeded the passing of Lord Lyndhurst's Act there had been 1,648 such marriages, of which 1,608 were among the richer classes and only forty among the poorer. It was, therefore, an idle pretence to say that this was a poor man's question. They had heard it argued over and over again that the present law had been the law of Christian marriage in every country up to the present day since the foundation of the Christian Church.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I want to know when any recorded canon of the Church prohibited marriages in this degree before the Edict of Constantine.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said there were absolutely no recorded canons either on the one side or on the other, but there was evidence on record that these marriages were never looked upon as legal in the Christian Church. The first evidence was that of Bishop Basil, in the 4th century, who said he had never heard of such marriages and that they were incestuous and unknown in the Church.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES said the edict to which he referred was dated 1535; was that to which the hon. Member referred earlier than that?

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN believed it was. At any rate, the earliest record of the law of the Christian Church was the opinion of a Christian Bishop, who said that such marriages were incestuous and unknown in the Church. That was the law in both the Eastern and the Western Church. As to the argument that a dispensation could be obtained by Roman Catholics in respect of these marriages, a dispensation was evidence of the law. If it was not the law there would be no need of a dispensation. But he would point out that a dispensation could be obtained in respect of a marriage in almost any degree of consanguinity or affinity. Therefore, if the law was to be altered on that ground, so far as marriage with a deceased wife's sister was concerned, marriages of every kind now prohibited on the ground of consanguinity or affinity should also be legalised. The position of the supporters of this Bill was absolutely illogical. Marriage with a deceased husband's brother stood on exactly the same footing as marriage with a deceased wife's sister; but he was told there was no demand for it. It seemed, then, that this question must be argued, not as a matter of high principle, but as a question of supply and demand. Surely that was not a very exalted or logical ground to take. He would never consent to a change in the marriage law until there had been a complete inquiry into the whole question. As to the colonial argument, he was sure that if the colonial grievance could be met by passing a Colonial Marriage Act, none of those who objected to this particular proposal would resist the passage of such a law. But to say that because the colonies had legalised these marriages they should be legalised in this country was another matter. It suggested that the colonies were to manage, not merely their own affairs, but the affairs of this country also. He opposed the change because he believed there was no sufficient justification for it, and also on social grounds. Hitherto the sister of a deceased wife had been able, without reproach, to live in the house of her brother-in-law and look after the children, giving them that love and care which nobody else could show. If once this Bill passed, and the sister became marriageable, she could no longer be treated as a member of the family, and the position which had been productive of so much good in the past would become an impossible one. He therefore asked the House to pause before passing the Bill.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University), who was indistinctly heard, said he was one of the very few Members in the House who could say they had no doubt about the feeling of their constituents on this subject. He was convinced that if his constituents were polled a vast majority would be against the Bill—at any rate, those who were in holy orders, and surely a large body of clergy had a right to ask consideration for their views. He hoped they should hear no more of the fallacies that the opposition to the Bill came from one particular section of the Church, and that the heart of the great Liberal Party was firmly set in favour of the Bill. The first was disposed of by the fact that his right hon. friend the Member for the Honiton Division of Devon moved the rejection of the Bill, and the second by the inadequate representation of the Liberal Party in the House on the present occasion. If there was a strong public opinion in favour of the Bill, why did that opinion not insist on its being carried? The Unionist Party had not been in power during the whole forty years history of this measure; why had not the Liberal Party in its years of office taken it up and passed it.

MR. CHARLES SEELY (Lincoln): They have passed it in this House, and it was rejected by the Lords.

*MR. TALBOT said that if the people of England had set their minds on the Bill the House of Lords would not have stood in the way for all these years. The reason the measure had not passed was that it was not one which any section of the community were really anxious to see on the Statute-book. If the pecuniary support were removed from this agitation and if the retrospective enactments of the Bill were eliminated, so as to make it only apply to the future, there would be not the slightest chance of its success. Among the strong Liberal Statesmen of the near past who had opposed the Bill were the late Duke of Argyll, the late Lord Selborne, and the late Lord Coleridge.

He had with him extracts from speeches by each of those statesmen, but he would read only one by the late Lord Coleridge. Speaking in the House of Lords on June 25th, 1880, Lord Coleridge said—

> "I could have some sympathy and some respect for an agitation which had for its object a reconsideration of the whole marriage law, which went upon some principle which distinguished, *e.g.*, broadly between consanguinity and affinity, between kinsfolk and connections. But this Bill is founded on no principle; it sets man free, but it leaves woman bound. It lets the husband marry his wife's sister, because it is said she is not his sister, but it forbids the wife to marry her husband's brother, because he is her brother. Where is the justice—the common fairness of this? It is not easy to overstate the benefits which the whole of society derives from the social relations at present possible between the husband and wife and the family of the other. Affection into which passion does not enter is the great civiliser of mankind. . . . Impassionate affection refines and lifts up and is the source of half the graces and more than half the beauty and delight of social life. Now your wife's sisters are your own, and the circle of impassionate affection is largely widened. But pass this Bill, and they become to you like any other woman, and the circle of impassionate affection is at once contracted.
>
> Who can count the sum of innocent delight and comfort which this relation has given to men who most need such comfort, and at a time when they need it most? . . . Why, for the sake of the few who do want to marry their wives' sisters, are sisters-in-law to be abolished from the vast majority of those men who do not so wish? . . . I will admit that the law of marriage, having been altered in some of our colonies and altered in the direction of this Bill, somewhat complicates the question. But much as I regret this, and disagreeable as some of the consequences may be, I cannot admit that we are to change a law which we in these islands think for the general good because our colonies have passed a law which we do not think wise or beneficial."

Referring to the state of the Treasury Bench, which at the moment was empty, and of the Front Opposition Bench, on which the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries alone was seated, the right hon. Gentleman declared, in conclusion, that a great change in the marriage laws ought not to be made when the Ministers of the Crown and the leaders of the Opposition did not show sufficient interest in the subject to give the House an opinion for or against.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 164; Noes, 94. (Division List No. 73).

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead.*)
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Black, Alexander William
Boulnois, Edmund
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Lewis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Foster, Sir Michael (*Lond Univ.*
Foster, Sir Walter, (*Derby Co.*)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor (*Sw'nsea*
Jones, William (*Carnarv'nshire*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinb'rgh W*
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh N.*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Mooney, John J.

Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipper'ry Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, Jas. (*Wicklow, W.*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
Palmer, Sir Charles M (*Durham*
Palmer, George Wm. (*Reading*
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Phillipps, John Wynford
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick B.*)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stroyan, John
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Younger, William
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Gilbert Parker and
Sir Brampton Gurdon.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anstruther, H. T.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Baldwin, Alfred
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bell, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Lt. Col. H. F. (*Middx.*
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Campbell, J. H M. (*Dublin Univ*
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carew, James Laurence
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlayne, T. (*S'thampton*)
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Joyce, Michael
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Malcolm, Ian
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Brien, P. J. *Tipperary, N.*)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pilkington, Col. Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Reddy, M.
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J G. (*Oxf'd. Univ.*
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Ure, Alexander
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C E (*Taunton*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir John Kennaway and
Mr. Heywood Johnstone.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER moved that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

MR. HARDY (Kent, Ashford) urged the House to seriously consider the question before sending a Bill of this character to the Grand Committee. Grand Committees could only work efficiently when engaged upon Bills which were not of a controversial character. [Cries of

"Oh, oh."] Hon. Members who made that ejaculation probably did not know the difficulties of the case. This Bill was one upon which there would be peculiar difficulties. As was well known, the Grand Committee was constituted more or less upon a party basis, and no selection which his right hon. friend could make could possibly meet the views and opinions which were held upon this subject. It had been said that this Bill did not lend itself to controversy, but in his opinion it was one of the most controversial matters that could possibly come before a Committee of this House. But even if the question was held to be non-controversial, was it fair that a Grand Committee should be asked to conduct a lengthy investigation, the result of which would be that time would be wasted, because after the measure had been referred back to the House there were so many other Bills which occupied a better position? Consequently the labours of the Grand Committee would almost necessarily be wasted. If they desired Grand Committees to continue to work efficiently, he thought it was most undesirable to press them into doing work of such a highly controversial character. He hoped the House would remember the history of this measure and refuse to permit it to go before a Grand Committee, but allow it to take its ordinary course in the Committee of this House.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) hoped the House would allow the measure to go to a Grand Committee. It sometimes fell to his lot to have to speak to an empty House, but he did not argue on that account that hon. Members did not take any interest in the subject under discussion. He thought the reason was that they did not care to hear what he had got to say. By the fortunes of the ballot they had been able to bring this matter before the House. There were no new circumstances, and this was the third year running the measure had been before the House. Therefore, he thought the best thing to do would be to take a division without any further debate.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan), as a member of the Committee for many years, had no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the present measure was not suited for discussion by a Grand Committee. This matter was not a subject of administration, but a subject which greatly moved people's passions. There could not, in his opinion, be a tribunal more unsuited for the discussion of such a question than a Grand Committee. The hon. Member opposite had said that this was the only chance for the Bill, but he had never heard a more extraordinary Parliamentary argument. He objected to this course because it was a bad mode of procedure and surely the House of Commons ought not to take such an unsatisfactory step in order that this Bill might have its only chance. That was a reversal of their Parliamentary procedure, and of all the principles which they should insist upon carrying out. Another objection to referring the Bill to the Committee was that it would occupy the whole of the session. He thought some regard ought to be paid to other Bills. He had great confidence in the work of the Standing Committees when they were dealing with subjects which they were competent to discuss; but to refer this Bill to the Standing Committee on Law would be an almost fatal procedure, and would greatly menace the authority of the Standing Committees and would lead to disastrous results. Great injury would also be done to the principle of delegation, which was absolutely essential to the good working of the Parliamentary machine.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he regretted to hear the opposition to this Bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Law. This Bill above all others was one which lent itself to discussion upstairs. It was controversial, but so was every Bill upon which the House was not unanimous. Between controversy and complication there was a gulf. This was a Bill to authorise people to marry their deceased wife's sister. That might be a good thing or a bad thing, but it was not a complicated thing. He held that the Bill was particularly adapted for reference to a Standing Committee. The only question now before the House was whether the will of Parliament should prevail, or whether it should be overridden by a powerful, but not numerically very strong, minority.

*Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he desired to call the attention of the House to the object for which these Standing Committees were originally instituted. When the Standing Committees were originally instituted by Mr. Gladstone it was most explicitly stated that they were not intended for controversial Bills. This was accordingly not a proper Bill to go to one of those Committees which were instituted for the consideration of measures not of general importance but for specialties of law to meet various wants in different parts of the country. Was a measure dealing with the marriage law a specialty of law or a question which affected only one part of the country? Taking the original intention for which these Committees were established, there was no doubt that it was never intended that such Bills as this should be referred to a Grand Committee. Did his hon. friend who had made this proposal think they were going to gain anything by referring this Bill to the Standing Committee? This was a Bill which raised so many acute differences of opinion, upon which Amendments could be moved, that it meant simply having the whole fight over again on the Report Stage. If they wished to preserve the Standing Committees for the objects for which Mr. Gladstone intended they ought not to send this Bill to the Standing Committee on Law. In the interests of the Standing Committees he hoped this Bill would not be referred to the Committee on Law.

Mr. SEELY supported the reference to the Standing Committee on Law. The hon. Member who had just sat down had urged that this was not a reasonable Bill to send to the Standing Committee, but he would point out that it was not proposed to introduce anything venomous into the measure. He thought that this was just the sort of Bill that ought to go to the Standing Committee. This was a measure which did not affect the vast majority of people, and never would. It was a Bill which affected a small number of people, but although the number of cases affected was small the hardship was great, and this was just the kind of measure for which Standing Committees were intended. From the nature of the case they could not expect to have a great and popular enthusiasm behind it, but there was a general consent of the laity of this country in favour of the measure. He urged the House to send this Bill to the Standing Committee. The hon. Member for Oldham had said that he and his ancestors for three generations had opposed this Bill, but he wished to state that for three generations he and his ancestors had supported it, and what was more they had steadily beaten the hon. Member. He hoped the House would allow the Bill to go to the Committee upstairs so that they might have a final decision upon the question.

*Mr. TALBOT thought that hon. Members were entitled to have the guidance of the leaders of the House on this matter, and, in view of the condition of the Treasury bench, appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton to express his views. Had it been thought for a moment that measures of this kind would be referred to the Standing Committees they would never have been appointed. Mr. Gladstone's opinion had been quoted, and was he an authority whose opinion should be disregarded in this House? The Bill proposing to reform the licensing laws, and the Bill for the Regulation of the Employment of Children had been referred to a Grand Committee. He maintained that in each of these cases the House had agreed upon the principle of the Bill; they were all agreed that there should be a reform in the licensing laws, and that there should be a reform in conditions for the employment of children. These Bills had been, and were being, considered by the Grand Committee with the utmost deliberation, good temper, and good humour, and the result was, and would be, that they would emerge satisfactory measures for the consideration of the House. Could anybody say that a Bill for changing the marriage law of England was one on the principle of which the House was agreed? One section desired that the measure should be passed, but there was another section who ardently desired that it should not be passed. Was that a Bill that could be considered in such a Committee? The hon. Member for Lincoln had said that the Bill only affected a few people in the country, and that, therefore, it should be sent to the Grand Committee, but the hon. Member who said so did not understand the position. It was not because the Bill would only affect a few people that it was being opposed. The objection of the opponents, right or wrong, was that they believed the whole principle of the thing was wrong, and if they passed a Bill which was wrong on such a subject as this, it affected the whole community.

MR. SEELY said the hon. Member had misunderstood him. What he said was that the number of people affected would be small, and that, therefore, it was a Bill most suited for the consideration of a Grand Committee.

*MR. TALBOT said he based his appeal to the Leaders on both sides of the House on the fact that this Bill—and he wanted to ask them whether they agreed or not—was in its essence absolutely controversial. No statement by his hon. friend or anybody could prevent it from being so.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said the right hon. Gentleman had made a personal appeal to him. He was in the House when the Standing Committees were originally founded, and he well remembered the speech of Mr. Gladstone to which reference had been made; but that was in 1882, and we were now in 1903, and it was necessary to take into consideration the course of procedure on both sides since, in reference to sending Bills to these Committees. The hon. Member for Wigan had based his objection to the Bill being sent to the Grand Committee on the same ground as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University, namely, that the House was not agreed on the principle of the Bill; but the moment the House agreed to the Second Reading it had agreed to the principle of a Bill, and the Second Reading of this Bill had been agreed to in fifteen divisions, with every class of majority — Liberal, Conservative, or Unionist. Even if the most eager opponent of the Bill raised a syllable of opposition to the principle of the measure in the Standing Committee he would be ruled out of order at once. All that the Committee could deal with was the details of the Bill, and it was a Bill without details. He would remind the House of the Church Discipline Bill, on which there was the strongest division of opinion, which met with such determined opposition that Mr. Gladstone himself went up and sat on the Grand Committee, the only time he did so. The Licensing Bill of last year, which was also a controversial Bill, went to the Grand Committee; and there had been similar Bills of the present Government which had been treated in the same way. Let them not pretend shams with each other. They knew what this opposition meant. The opposition to sending this Bill to a Grand Committee had nothing to do with any regard for the sanctity of the Grand Committees or their procedure; it arose because it was thought a good way of having another fight by a most ingenious, powerful, and intelligent minority against a decision of the House, which was not a chance decision but one which had been repeated during a long series of years and after several general elections. He did not think that to take such a course was fairly to carry out the ordinary rules for the progress of business in that House.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.) said he would not have taken part in the debate if it had not been for the last words of the right hon. Gentleman. He desired on his own behalf to protest most respectfully, but at the same time most energetically, against the description given by the right hon. Gentleman of the attitude of some hon. Members who opposed the reference of this Bill to a Grand Committee. In voting, as he would, against the Motion, he was actuated by no motive like that which the right hon. Gentleman described, but by a motive quite independent of the special considerations underlying this Bill. He did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in his description of the class of Bill which it had generally been intended to refer to the Grand Committees. It was perfectly true, as the right hon. Gentleman had reminded them, that this measure had been debated and carried by substantial majorities in different Parliaments; but he submitted that in the minds of the majority of the Members of the House the sort of Bill which they thought ought to go to a Grand Committee was one which the great majority, if not the whole House, desired to see passed, but in an amended form, and sometimes a considerably amended form. This was a Bill which no Amendment could make agreeable to a very considerable minority; and to send such a Bill to a Grand Committee was to cast upon that Committee work which they could not do. He believed that if the House sent a Bill of this character to a Grand Committee the other Bills sent there would stand no chance whatever of being passed, because the Committee would embark on a controversial discussion which would take up most of its time. He would have voted against the Motion without stating his reasons if it had not been for the concluding remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, which appeared to him to place an incorrect and unfair interpretation on the motives of those who were opposed to it.

Mr. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford) said he would address himself to the question whether this was a proper kind of Bill to be referred to a Grand Committee. He ventured to think that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite with reference to the Church Discipline Bill, in regard to which Mr. Gladstone attended the Grand Committee, and which created such great controversy, was the strongest argument that could be adduced that this was not a Bill which should be sent to the Grand Committee. What happened during the passage of the Church Discipline Bill through the Grand Committee showed that it belonged to a controversial class that ought not to be dealt with by Grand Committee. He ventured to think that the proper class of Bill which should be sent to the Grand Committee was that as to the principle, of which there was no great controversy, but which contained details requiring to be carefully threshed out in discussion upstairs. In that way a great deal of the time of the House was saved and trouble avoided, and the work was equally well or better done. He submitted that such a Bill as that now before the House, which proposed a vast constitutional change in the law of this country was one every detail of which should be threshed out in Committee of the whole House, and not by a Committee upstairs. For these reasons he hoped the House would not agree to refer the Bill to the Grand Committee.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 74.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Geo. M. (*Edinburgh*)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J A (*Worc*)
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C Munro (*Leith*)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*)
Graham, Henry Robert

Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (*L'ndn'de'ry*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearly, Hudson E.
Knowles, Lees
Lambert, George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee Arthur H (*Hants. Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (*Accrington*
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
M'Laren, Sir Chas Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh N*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid*)
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, Jas. (*Wicklow, W.*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Palmer, G. Wm. (*Reading*)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. T. (*Dumfries*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick B.*)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stroyan, John
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
William, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm.*
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Younger, William
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Gilbert Parker and Sir Brampton Gurdon.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anstruther, H. T.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bull, William James
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carew, James Laurence
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlayne, T. (*Southmptn*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. A (*City of Lond.*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Joyce, Michael
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks N R.*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndam (*Bath*)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Percy, Earl

Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reddy, M.
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hon. M. W(*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford East*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. JG(*Oxf'd Univ.*
Tollemache, Henry James
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Welby, Lt.-Col A. C. E(*Taunton*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*)
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOE—
Sir John Kennaway and
Mr. Heywood Johnstone.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

[SECOND READING.]

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) moved the Second Reading of this Bill. He said the principle of the measure was well known to the House, and it had behind it the opinion of the vast majority of the people of Wales. It was backed by an overwhelming majority of the Welsh Members of Parliament. If the principle of Local Veto were applied to Wales, he believed the measure might be the means of paving the way for the application of the principle to the other parts of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the principle of the Bill was no doubt in one sense a good one. That was to say, the objects the promoters of the Bill had at heart were objects which its opponents had also at heart. They were both desirous to put down intemperance, but it was because he could not agree that the method proposed in the Bill was the best for accomplishing that object that he felt obliged to oppose the Second Reading. The promoters of the Bill wished to bring about temperance by legislation. The method which he and his friends advocated was the encouragement of temperance by example. [Laughter.] He did not know why hon. Gentlemen laughed. He thought it was undoubted that during the last thirty or forty years there had been great improvement in this matter. He did not think anybody would maintain that the greater sobriety of the nation had been caused by legislation, and therefore it must have been caused by example. Thirty or forty years ago there was nothing more common in the upper classes of society than to get drunk after dinner. Now it was very uncommon, and he ventured to say that if a man did get drunk no one would ever ask him to dine.

And, it being half-past Five of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Friday, 19th June.

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

On the order for the Second Reading of this Bill being read.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.) objected to this business being taken now.

MR. ASHER (Elgin Burghs) appealed to his hon. friend not to oppose the Bill. He believed the Scottish Office approved of the measure being read a second time and sent to the Standing Committee on Law. It was very much desired in Scotland, and it was introduced at the request of all the towns affected by it.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW declined to withdraw his objection.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the earlier closing of shops." [Shops (Early Closing) Bill [Lords.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.]

TRADE MARKS.

Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Butcher, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Cawley.

TRADE MARKS BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 14th May, and to be printed. [Bill 174.]

GAS UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities for the year ended the 25th day of March, 1903 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 331, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

GAS UNDERTAKINGS.

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom, other than those of Local Authorities, for the year ended the 31st day of December, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 330, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

Mr. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he had any communication to make to the House with reference to Manchuria.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord Cranborne, Rochester): The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has received from the Russian Ambassador, to whom he had addressed an inquiry upon the subject, a verbal statement to the following effect: The information which has reached the British Government as to the conditions required for the evacuation of Manchuria is not at all correct. The discussions which are proceeding at Peking concern Manchuria alone, and have reference to certain guarantees which are indispensable for securing the most important Russian interests in the province after the withdrawal of the Russian troops. As for measures which might tend to exclude foreign Consuls, or obstruct foreign commerce and the use of ports, such measures are far from entering into the intentions of the Imperial Government. They consider, on the contrary, that the development of foreign commerce is one of the main objects for which the Russian Government have undertaken the construction of the lines of railway in that part of the world.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for adjournment,

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said he wished to inform the House that the Budget Resolutions would be put down as the third order on Monday. The first and second orders were the Irish Land Bill and the Ireland Development Grant Bill. The Chief Secretary was perfectly restored to health, and there was every prospect that he would be present in the House on Monday. In cases of influenza, however, there were occasional relapses; and, as it would be impossible to proceed with the Irish Bills in the absence of the Chief Secretary, the Government had put down the Budget Resolutions as the third order.

Adjourned at Twenty-four minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 4th May, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas; London Hydraulic Power; Sutton District Water; Winchester Water and Gas.

Also the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill:—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1.)

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways [H.L.]—(Petition for additional Provision).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Lochnell Estate Bill [H.L.]. Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1^{a}.

Kips' Patent. Petition of Frederic Ellsworth Kip, praying for leave to introduce a Bill for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to William Phillips Thompson in respect of inventions communicated to him from abroad by Frederic Ellsworth Kip (1) for improvements in stop-motions for looms, warping machines, and the like; and (2) for improvements in electrical stop-motions for warps; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 9th of March and 30th of April last discharged, and Bill committed.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. (Petition for additional provision.) Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Rickmansworth Gas Bill [H.L.], Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.] Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on 9th and 26th March last discharged; and Bill committed.

Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on 12th and 26th March last discharged; and Bill committed.

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}; an Amendment made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition) Bill [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.] Read 3^{a}, and passed and sent to the Commons.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Aston Manor Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Torquay Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Chatham and District Light

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Railways Bill [H.L.]; Brighton Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—

E. Camperdown (chairman),
E. Lathom,
V. Powerscourt,
L. Cheylesmore,
L. Llangattock.

Agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 12th instant at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (No. 45.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Burton-upon-Trent Corporation Tramways, Bury Corporation Tramways, Cardiff Corporation Tramways (Extension), Huddersfield Corporation Tramways, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways, and Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 46.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Barrow-in-Furness Tramways, Horsforth Urban District Council Tramways, Keighley Corporation Tramways, and Ramsbottom Urban District Council Tramways.

Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 47.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover and District Water, Goring and Streatley District Water, Leatherhead and District Water, Ludgershall Water, and Mid-Kent Water.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 48.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aldershot Gas and Water, Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water, St. David's Gas and Water, St. Neots Water, and Wexford Gas.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 49.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Cobham Gas, Conisbrough Gas, Hailsham Gas, St. Ives (Huntingdonshire) Gas, and Woking District Gas.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 50.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Brading Harbour District Gas, Crossgates, Halton, and Seacroft Gas, Herne Bay Gas, Pembroke Docks and Town Gas, and Riddings District Gas.

Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 51.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Llandudno, Galway, and Scrabster.

Were presented by the Lord Wolverton; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

North British Railway (General Powers) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the North British Railway, Was presented by the Lord Balfour (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, Sections 8 and 9); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 52.)

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTRATION (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition against; of Society of Advocates in Aberdeen; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Petition for abrogation of; of Roman Catholics residing in Branton and Byshottles District, County Durham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS.

Petition against the sale of, on Sunday; of the inhabitants of Swindon, in the county of Wilts; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREATY SERIES, No. 6, 1903.

Accession of the Republic of Guatemala to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field, 24th March, 1903.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2967. United States (Boston).
No. 2968. United States (Texas).

EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND).

Annual Report for the year 1902.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland, for the year 1901 (Part II. Scientific Investigation).

ARMY (CANTEENS AND REGIMENTAL INSTITUTES).

Report of the Committee on Canteens and Regimental Institutes.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).

Four Orders with respect to the urban county districts of Bangor, Carrick-on-Suir, and Tullamore.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 to 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licences granted by His Majesty to (1) Herbert Arthur Green, (2) to Alfred Edwardes, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

The Earl of Belmore added to the Select Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee that they have added the Earl of Belmore to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

BERWICKSHIRE COUNTY TOWN BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

NAVAL FORCES BILL.

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

THE CASE OF COLONEL KINLOCH.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD in rising to call attention to the procedure followed by the Court of inquiry, held on the 14th December, 1902, in reference to events which had taken place in the Grenadier Guards, and to ask—(1) Whether under Sub-section M. of the Rules of Procedure, Part II. Section 124, Colonel Kinloch did not apply for and receive a copy of the report of the Court of inquiry: (2) Whether Sub-sections C., F., G., regulating the procedure of Courts of inquiry, were not violated: (3) Whether it is not a fact that Colonel Kinloch was afforded no opportunity of explaining, completing or amplifying his statement before he was removed from his command and placed on half-pay: (4) Whether it is not a breach of the Army Act to obtain the publication of, and print as evidence, a voluntary statement made before a Court of inquiry by an officer not on his oath, not on his trial, and assured that his statement is not evidence: (5) Whether the statutory procedure by aggrieved officers for the redress of wrongs as defined in Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act was followed in the case of Lieutenant Leveson-

Gower, who had been called upon to resign his commission by the regimental authorities as being no longer a credit to his regiment, said: My Lords, I must first explain the reason for again bringing this subject before the House. Last Tuesday the noble and gallant Earl the Commander-in-Chief was not in his place. The noble and gallant Earl kindly informed me that it would be possible for him to attend to-day, with a view, I hope, of taking part in the debate. The noble Duke the President of the Council, said that if it was desired to discuss the case of Colonel Kinloch the Government would not object on an explicit notice being given. I hasten to assure the noble Duke and your Lordships that I have no intention of discussing the case of Colonel Kinloch. My intention is to use that case only as an illustration of the injustice which may be perpetrated by disregarding certain provisions of the Army Act, and by secret Courts of Inquiry conducted in a manner contrary to the Rules enacted by Parliament for the vindication of the character and military reputation of officers concerned. I do not discuss the decision of the Commander-in-Chief, I do not care why he acted. I want to know how he acted. I desire to point out to your Lordships that the character of Colonel Kinloch and the state of his regiment have nothing to do with the legality and the justice, of the methods employed in removing him from his command. Those methods affect the position of every officer in His Majesty's service. They involve important constitutional points besides those of military law and procedure. They do not involve any personal points. I call your Lordships' attention to the procedure followed by the court of inquiry held on the 14th December last. This is not a case of rough and ready justice in time of war, when the rights of individuals must yield to the interests of the service. It is an instance of the strict, deliberate administration of justice in time of peace. Parliament has laid down Rules for the conduct of these Courts, protecting officers against the possible abuses of these secret, informal and extra judicial Courts. No discretionary power vested in the Commander-in-Chief entitles him to depart from the Rules by which these Courts are governed. In reference to my first question I quote Sub-section M—

> "An officer or soldier who is tried by Court-martial in respect of any matter or thing which has been reported on by a Court of Inquiry, and, unless the Secretary of State sees reason to order otherwise, an officer or soldier whose character or military reputation is, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, affected by anything in the evidence before, or in the report of, a Court of Inquiry, shall be entitled to a copy of the proceedings of the Court, including any report made by the Court, on payment of the actual cost of the copy required, not exceeding twopence for every folio of seventy-two words."

In accordance with this section, Colonel Kinloch applied for and received a copy of the report of the Court, because, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, his character and military reputation had been affected by the proceedings of the Court. I do not think that there is a noble Lord in this House who would for a moment argue that Colonel Kinloch's character or military reputation had not been affected by the proceedings of the Court. It therefore follows that the Court of inquiry was a Court holding an inquiry which affected the character and military reputation of an officer. Why, then, were all the provisions for the protection of officers so affected absolutely disregarded?

I now come to Question 2 on the Paper, and quote Sub-section C:

> "The Court will be guided by the written instructions of the officer who assembled the Court. The instructions should be full and explicit, and must state the general character of the information required from the Court in their report."

We had it from the noble Earl, the Under-Secretary of State for War, on Tuesday last, that there was no mention of the officer's character or military reputation in those written instructions. Neither the Court nor the officer knew that the officer's character or military reputation could be affected by the proceedings. Therefore, my Lords, I contend, that from its inception and by its actual constitution, the Court and all its proceedings are utterly void and illegal. I now quote Sub-section F:

> "Whenever any inquiry affects the character or military reputation of an officer or soldier full opportunity must be afforded to the officer or soldier of being present throughout the inquiry, and of making any statement, and of giving any evidence he may wish to give, and

> of cross-examining any witness whose evidence, in his opinion, affects his character or military reputation."

Every one of these safeguards were disregarded. The officer was particularly requested not to be present throughout this Court of Inquiry, because the Court believed that they were inquiring into the conduct of the junior officers, and knew that the junior officers would speak more unrestrainedly if their commanding officer was not present. He was not even allowed to complete his own statement. He mentioned to the Court that his statement was not completed. The Court said he would be called later, but they did not know that the Court was to be suddenly dispersed, and the statement left unfinished. He was not allowed to cross-examine witnesses. He was not allowed to produce witnesses in defence of his character or military reputation. I quote Sub-section G:

> "It is the duty of a Court of Inquiry to put such questions to a witness as they think desirable for testing the truth or accuracy of any evidence he has given, and otherwise for eliciting the truth."

Now, there was a direct conflict of evidence between the officer affected and his subaltern. That subaltern escaped all examination by the Court and all cross-examination by the officer, because neither the Court nor the officer knew that his character or military reputation would be affected by the proceedings. That then, my Lords, is the mode under which the Court of Inquiry collected the information on which the Commander-in-Chief deprived an officer of his command, and of his full pay, and of his prospects of pension.

I now come to Question 3 on the paper. When Colonel Kinloch was informed of the decision of the Commander-in-Chief, he at once pointed out that he had never been heard in his own defence at all, that the statement which he had made was incomplete, and that he had been deprived of those advantages to which he was entitled under the Parliamentary contract. Your Lordships will perceive that this representation at once brought to the notice of the authorities the irregularity of the Court of Inquiry. It is the duty of the Secretary of State to assure himself that accused officers have received all the opportunities for their defence prescribed by the Army Act and the Rules of Procedure. I have shown to your Lordships that to Colonel Kinloch under the procedure adopted every one of these opportunities was denied.

I now come to Question 4 on the Paper and quote Sub-section L:

> "The proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, or any confession, statement or answer to a question made or given at a Court of Inquiry, shall not be admissible in evidence against an officer or soldier, nor shall any evidence respecting the proceedings of the Court be given against any officer or soldier."

I hold in my hand a Parliamentary Paper with this heading, "Evidence given by Col. Kinloch before a Court of Inquiry." The word "evidence" should be struck out and replaced by these words, "A voluntary statement made by Colonel Kinloch as a witness, not on his oath, not on his trial, and which is not admissible in evidence against him according to the Army Act, but has been used by the Commander-in-Chief as the basis for his decision." I challenge the noble Earl, the Under Secretary of State, to prove that what I have substituted for the word "evidence" is not absolutely correct according to the Army Act, and I defy the noble Earl to justify the use of this word "evidence" as it stands on this Paper. If this Paper had been published with the heading I have substituted, and the accuracy of which I challenge the noble Earl to disprove, how would it have been received? I think it would have been received with indignation and derision; but stamped with the word "evidence" and published by the authority of the Secretary of State, it has been received by Parliament and the country as though it were the legal evidence of a man who knew himself to be upon his trial before a formal tribunal, and as the legitimate basis for the decision of the Commander-in-Chief.

I now pass to a question arising out o the speech of the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War on Tuesday last. I mean the exercise of the Royal Warrant. I apprehend that the right manner of using the Royal Warrant is as follows. The Commander-in-Chief recommends the Secretary of State to remove an officer from his command, and gives no reason to the officer for his removal except that he is removed by exercise of the Royal Warrant; that is, by the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, but on the authority of the Secretary of State, who is responsible that in the procedure adopted, every provision of the Army Act and the Rules of Procedure have been correctly complied with. Now the Commander-in-Chief had decided to proceed by means of the Court of Inquiry, and had based his decision on the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry, which had been irregularly conducted, and the irregularities of which had been brought to the notice of the authorities before the sentence was announced. I now quote again Sub-section L—

> "The proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, or any confession, statement, or answer to a question made or given at a Court of Inquiry, shall not be admissible in evidence against an officer or soldier, nor shall any evidence respecting the proceedings of the Court be given against any officer or soldier."

A further constitutional point which I have to put to your Lordships is—Can the Commander-in-Chief, by virtue of the Royal Warrant, clothe himself with authority to do what Parliament declines to permit him to do, and proceed to an act of annihilation upon the information of a Court of Inquiry—information which is not evidence according to military law; which is not evidence according to civil law; and which is not evidence according to common sense. Can he, in a word, nullify an Act of Parliament by virtue of his Royal Warrant?

My last question arises under Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act. I went into this matter at length on Tuesday last, and my remarks are no doubt in the hands of the noble and gallant Earl the Commander-in-Chief. I therefore only state that I base my argument upon the statement made by the Secretary of State for War on the 11th March, in which he says—

> "Lord De Saumarez would never have gone to the Commander in-Chief had it not been that a relative of his had received notice from the regimental authorities that on the following Monday Mr. Leveson-Gower would be called upon to resign his commission, because he had ceased to be a credit to his regiment."

Why had Mr. Leveson-Gower been asked by the colonel commanding the three battalions to resign? I understand that on the 1st December, in the battalion orderly room and in the presence of the two senior officers of the battalion, Mr. Leveson-Gower admitted having made false statements concerning his commanding officer, and that subsequently in the regimental orderly room he repeated the same admission before the colonel of the regiment and his regimental adjutant. Now there were senior officers of the regiment present on both occasions. I presume that the opinion of these senior officers is known at the War Office. I ask the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War, did they agree in saying that there was an admission of false statements concerning his commanding officer by Mr. Leveson-Gower on those two occasions?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE): What are the actual terms of the false statement?

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I ask if inquiries have been made of the senior officers concerning the false statement.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I do not know what the false statement refers to.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: That is not my point. Have the senior officers been questioned concerning the false statement?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: My Lords, the noble Duke has recapitulated in clear and concise terms the speech he delivered a few days ago, and I would remind the House that on that occasion I asked your Lordships' indulgence if I did not——

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I beg the noble Earl's pardon for interrupting him, but I did not understand that the noble Duke behind me (the Duke of Bedford) had concluded his speech.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: Yes.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I beg the noble Lord's pardon.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I was reminding the House when the noble Duke interrupted me that I had asked your Lordships' indulgence if I did not reply in detail to all the unexpected and startling statements which the noble Duke made on Tuesday last. He has not withdrawn any of those statements, but has, I am glad to see, placed Questions on the Paper in a clear, concrete form, with the exception, perhaps, of the last, and I propose to answer those Questions as shortly as I can. I must first deplore the fact that the noble Duke has not the courage of his opinions. He states that it is not Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch's case that he is bringing before the House. Well, I leave that to your Lordships' judgment, but I assert that it is Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch's case that he is bringing forward. He has suggested to the House that the treatment which Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch received was a grave injustice to that officer; he has implied that he has not received fair play and that he has been removed from the command of his regiment by unworthy methods. I consider this to be the gravest possible charge that could be brought against the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief. I am glad that the Commander-in-Chief is in the House and that he proposes personally to reply to the insinuations made by the noble Duke in his absence the other night. I would point out to the House, before proceeding to answer these Questions in detail, that to remove an officer from the British Army there are three courses open to the military authorities. The first is to try the officer by Court-martial, and the Court can sentence that officer without further reference to a higher authority. The second course is for the Commander-in-Chief to appoint a Court of Inquiry, and on the report of that Court he can judge whether or not a *primâ facie* case has been made out against an officer sufficient to justify his being sent for trial by Court-martial. The third course open to the military authorities, if they are not satisfied with the circumstances connected with an officer, is to call for an explanation, and if the Commander-in-Chief is satisfied on the documentary evidence placed before him that the complaint is well founded, he has a perfect right, without any further inquiry, to place an officer on half-pay.

I now turn to the first Question on the Paper, in which the noble Duke asks whether under Sub-section M of the Rules of Procedure, Part II., Section 124, Colonel Kinloch did not apply for, and receive, a copy of the report of the Court of Inquiry. I denied the existence the other night of any such report, and I again deny its existence. I must briefly recapitulate the circumstances which led to the appointment of this so-called Court of Inquiry.

LORD SALTOUN: Will you kindly state the composition of the Court of Inquiry?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I will come to that. When the Commander-in-Chief had the irregularities that had taken place in the Grenadier Guards brought to his notice he asked the Officer commanding the Home District to report to him as to the truth of those allegations. The noble Duke, the other night, suggested that the Commander-in-Chief was wrong to have acted in that way. He implied, I think, that he should have told Lord De Saumarez, when he approached him directly, that he should have supplied the information through the proper channels. If that is the argument of the noble Duke I would like to ask what action the military authorities should take if they saw in the columns of a newspaper that certain irregularities were going on in any regiment? What is the Commander-in-Chief to do if a Question is asked in the House of Commons as to certain irregularities in a given regiment? Is it suggested that he should take no action? If it is, I think it is a very curious and a very illogical suggestion. The Commander-in-Chief took the only course that was open to him. He sent for the Officer commanding the Home District and said—"Report to me as to whether there is any truth in these allegations." The Commander-in-Chief had actually decided to appoint a Court of Inquiry at Aldershot to inquire into the circumstances of the case, but before that Court could sit it was necessary that he should have a full report from Sir Henry Trotter, the Officer commanding the Home District, in order that he might frame a reference to the Court and know to whom the responsibility for the irregularities that had occurred was due. Sir Henry Trotter, on his own responsibility, without one word to the Commander-in-Chief on the subject—I do not for a moment suggest that he was acting *ultra vires*—thought that the most convenient way of getting the information which the Commander-in-Chief desired was to appoint a regimental Court of Inquiry—really a regimental investigation—to find out what officers were connected with these irregularities and on whom the responsibility should rest. The Court sat for two days, and immediately they had finished taking the evidence of the various officers they forwarded the proceedings to Sir Henry Trotter.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: May I ask the noble Earl whether the proceedings were not forwarded in the form of "I beg to report," etc.?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The noble Duke is perfectly correct. It was a single officer's report. Colonel Ricardo was the officer commanding the regiment. He sat as president of the Court of Inquiry, and forwarded the proceedings of the Court with a covering letter, in which he summarised the evidence and gave his own views upon it. He wrote the letter from start to finish; it was in the first person, and he signed it himself. The other two officers constituting the Court did not sign it. The report of a Court of Inquiry must be signed by every officer present at the inquiry. I submit, therefore, that I was perfectly justified in denying the other day that such a thing as a report of the Court of Inquiry was in existence. The proceedings of the Court exist, and they consist of nothing more nor less than the evidence taken by the Court from the various officers in the regiment.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: Does the noble Earl consider that this Court was not a properly constituted Court of Inquiry? It has always been contended that Colonel Kinloch was heard by a fully constituted Court of Inquiry.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I am not going to state definitely whether the Court was properly or improperly constituted. So far as I am aware it was properly constituted for the purpose for which it was formed; but the point I wish to make is this, that if the Court had reported, every member of the Court would have signed the report, whereas nothing of the kind took place.

LORD SALTOUN: Did any member of the Court sign it?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: No. Colonel Ricardo was the officer commanding the two battalions of Grenadier Guards, and he was the president of the Court. I do not wish to dwell on this matter, because I think I have explained sufficiently clearly to the House the point as to whether there was a report or not. As a matter of fact, a Court of Inquiry cannot make any recommendation or report unless it is specially called upon to do so. A Court of Inquiry is an assemblage of officers to collect evidence and report with respect to a transaction into which the Commander-in-Chief cannot conveniently himself make inquiry, and there is this provision, that the Court will give no opinion on the conduct of any officer or soldier unless so directed by the commanding officer. The Court was not so directed. The only reference to the Court was to report upon the alleged bullying in the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards. It must be obvious that no report was called for from the Court and therefore no report was sent. In his first question the noble Duke asks whether Colonel Kinloch applied for a copy of the proceedings of the Court. It is perfectly true that he did apply, and I do not think, after having made inquiry, that the noble Duke was justified the other evening in contending that considerable delay occurred before Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch's request was granted.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: [I think that in the first instance the existence of the report was denied altogether.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: Because there was no report.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: But afterwards the report came.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I think it is a mere juggling with words. The moment that Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch applied to see the proceedings of the Court the General Officer commanding the Home District was instructed to show him, not only the evidence that had been given at the Court, but also the covering letter of Colonel Ricardo to Sir Henry Trotter.

Now I come to the second Question, whether Sub-sections C F G, regulating the procedure of Courts of Inquiry, were not violated. Sub-section C reads as follows—

> "The Court will be guided by the written instructions of the officer who assembled the Court. The instructions should be full and specific, and must state the general character of the information required from the Court in their report."

I still maintain that the report of a Court of Inquiry can be a report without any recommendations, and that the form of the proceedings of the Court constitutes a report. The reference to the Court was, as I have stated, to inquire into the alleged bullying in the Grenadier Guards; therefore I think I am justified in saying that Sub-section C was not violated. Then we come to Sub-section F, which reads as follows—

> "Whenever any inquiry affects the character or military reputation of an officer or soldier, full opportunity must be afforded to the officer or soldier of being present throughout the inquiry, and of making any statement, and of giving any evidence he may wish to make or give, and of cross-examining any witness whose evidence, in his opinion, affects his character or military reputation, and producing any witnesses in defence of his character or military reputation."

The answer to that question is that Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch was not on his trial. No charge had been preferred against him, and therefore he was not entitled to claim to be present during the hearing of the evidence given at the Court of Inquiry.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: May I ask why his statement before the Court is published as evidence if his character was not affected by it?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I can only answer by saying that it was evidence.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: Not according to the Army Act.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I will come to that. I think the noble Duke has misread the Army Act. The point is that no charge was preferred against Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch and therefore he had no right to claim to be present during the hearing of the Court of Inquiry. As regards Sub-section G, that Sub-section provides that—

> "It is the duty of a Court of Inquiry to put such questions to a witness as they think desirable for testing the truth or accuracy of any evidence he has given, and otherwise for eliciting the truth."

As far as I know, and I believe I am absolutely correct in stating this, the officers who gave evidence before that Court were asked such questions as the Court chose to put to them; but for the sake of convenience, and in accordance with ordinary practice, their evidence was returned as written statements by each officer who gave evidence.

Then I come to the third Question, whether it is not a fact that Colonel Kinloch was afforded no opportunity of explaining, completing, or amplifying his statement before he was removed from his command and placed on half-pay. The answer to that is very simple. An officer is not placed on half-pay until his name appears in the *Gazette*, and before Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch was gazetted on half-pay he was sent for by the Commander-in-Chief, who, in the presence of the Adjutant-General and of General Oliphant, heard Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch in his own defence.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: But this was nine days after Colonel Kinloch was sentenced.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: It is perfectly true that the Commander-in-Chief had decided to remove Lieutenant-Colonel Kinloch from his command, but he had not gazetted him. His name had not appeared in the *Gazette* and had Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch been able to adduce anything to show that there were reasons why he should not be deprived of the command of his regiment it would not have been too late. Therefore when the noble Duke suggests that he was given no opportunity of amplifying his evidence or of saying anything in his own defence he is making a statement that is not actually accurate, because Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch did have that opportunity granted him by the Commander-in-Chief as an act of grace. I now pass to Question 4, whether it is not a breach of the Army Act to obtain the publication of, and print as evidence, a voluntary statement made before a Court of Inquiry by an officer not on his oath, not on his trial, and assured that his statement is not evidence. To turn to the latter part of the Question first, I do not know how it comes that the noble Duke thinks he was assured that his statement was not evidence. I understand that no assurance was given him before he gave his evidence that his statement would not be treated as evidence.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: According to the Army Act it is not admissible in evidence against him.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: Will the noble Duke read the section of the Army Act again. Sub-section L reads—

> "The proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, or any confession, statement, or answer to a question made or given at a Court of Inquiry, shall not be admissible in evidence against an officer or soldier, nor shall any evidence respecting the proceedings of the Court be given against any officer or soldier."

But that means that if an officer has been before a Court of Inquiry and gives evidence, and subsequently has to take his trial before a Court-martial, then the evidence he gave before the Court of Inquiry shall not be admissible as evidence before the Court-martial. I would refer the noble Duke to the "Manual of Military Law," Chapter VI., Section 98, which reads—

> "The proceedings of a Court of Inquiry cannot be called for by Courts-martial, nor witnesses examined as to their contents; nor is any confession or statement made at a Court of Inquiry admissible against an officer or soldier before a Court-martial."

To suggest that, a Court of Inquiry having been appointed and having taken evidence, the Commander-in-Chief is not allowed to pay any attention to that evidence seems to me to be the most illogical and absurd proposition that could possibly be put forward. Then the noble Duke laid large stress on Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch's not having given evidence on oath. Does he suggest that Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch did not speak the truth in the evidence he gave? Does he suggest that he would like to go back on anything he said? Does Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch wish to say, "It is not true that I told Lieutenant Hamilton, in the presence of the Adjutant-General, that he deserved a licking," which, by the way, he got? Is it suggested that he did not hand Lieutenant Leveson-Gower over to be dealt with by the subalterns, he having committed an offence against military discipline. If not, I fail to understand what it is that the noble Duke wishes to urge in favour of Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch. We have his evidence, and on that evidence he was deprived of the command of his regiment, and, until it can be shown that the evidence, for some miraculous reason, was not correct, I can hardly think that the noble Duke is entitled to urge that there was any irregularity in the proceedings because Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch was not on his oath.

I now come to Question 5, Whether the statutory procedure by aggrieved officers for the redress of wrongs as defined in Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act was followed in the case of Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, who had been called upon to resign his commission by the regimental authorities as being no longer a credit to his regiment. I have explained that I do not quite understand the Question, and, as regards the last two lines, it is really difficult for me to comprehend the particular twist of the noble Duke's mind in this matter. He comes down to the House with the avowed intention of showing your Lordships that the Commander-in-Chief had exceeded his authority, had practically broken the contract that exists between an officer and the military authorities in having placed Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch on half-pay, and yet he suggests that because the regimental authorities had called upon Lieutenant Leveson-Gower to resign his commission, unless some unknown form of procedure was followed, that recommendation of the regimental authorities cannot be set aside. That would be to say, that what the Commander-in-Chief may not do it is perfectly admissible for a regimental authority to do—a proposition sufficiently preposterous in itself to need no denial, but in the light of military law, and from the point of view of facts as they are, it is perfectly meaningless, because the regimental authorities have no power to call upon an officer to resign his commission. It is only the supreme authority, the Commander-in-Chief, or the Secretary of State, who can call upon an officer to resign his commission. The noble Duke refers to Sections 42 and 27 of the Army Act, but I fail to see where those clauses come in. Lieutenant Leveson-Gower had no grievance to redress. He sent in his resignation voluntarily, but it was not accepted. Where do these sections come in? The noble Duke will not explain, and I therefore regret I must leave that part of the Question. I have nothing to add except to point out to the House, as I pointed out on Tuesday last, that the Commander-in-Chief acted perfectly within his authority and under the King's Regulations. In conclusion, I would read Section 669 of the King's Regulations—

> "A commanding officer is responsible to the King for the maintenance of discipline, efficiency, and proper system in the unit under his command. He will, by advice and by timely influence, endeavour to promote a good understanding and to prevent disputes. He is to discountenance any disposition in his officers to gamble or to extravagance. He is also to check any tendency among his officers to what are termed practical jokes, and, whenever any serious case requiring his interference arises, he is to record the manner in which it was disposed of, and submit the same for the information of the general officer commanding on his next inspection."

I regret to have to say it, but it is the case, that Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch did not discharge those duties of the high responsibility placed upon him, to the satisfaction of the Commander-in-Chief, and I submit to your Lordships that his removal was a proceeding which was absolutely and wholly correct.

EARL ROBERTS: My Lords, I had hoped, in the best interests of the Army generally, and those of the Grenadier Guards in particular, that your Lordships and the public had heard the last of a most disagreeable and unedifying episode; and I feel sure that hope was shared by all who are jealous of the honour of our Army, and who, like myself, glory in its grand reputation. I sincerely regret that by the action of the Duke of Bedford I am again forced to trespass on your Lordships' time and patience by a further explanation of my conduct o the painful case under discussion. But, my Lords, the Duke of Bedford in his speech last Tuesday, and in the Questions he has asked to-day, has so adversely criticised my mode of applying the Army Act and Rules of Procedure in dealing with this case, and has placed my action in regard to it in—to say the least of it—such an unfavourable light before your Lordships, that I feel myself constrained to crave your Lordships' indulgence while I state, as briefly as I can, the course I adopted, and my reasons for having followed that course. As I stated when last I had the honour of addressing this House, my interview with Lord De Saumarez took place on the evening of December 12th. The following morning, at the War Office, I told the Adjutant-General what had been brought to my notice as to the bullying of young officers in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, and I directed Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny to send for Sir Henry Trotter, the General Officer then in command of the Home District. Sir Henry Trotter was not to be found at the time, and the brigade major — Major Ruggles-Brise — obeyed my summons in his stead. To this officer I repeated the substance of Lord De Saumarez's communication. Major Ruggles-Brise then told me that some of the young officers had been behaving very badly, and had also complained in a body to outsiders of their treatment in the battalion, and that this was looked upon as something like mutiny. I asked Major Ruggles-Brise if there was no reason for the young officers appealing to outsiders, and whether it was true that some of them had been severely beaten by sentence of subaltern Courts-martial. Major Ruggles-Brise admitted that this was true; and I then told him that, as ment of the Post Office. Before I held my present office, I had some knowledge of it, as, in my capacity of Secretary to the Treasury, I represented the Postmaster-General in this House, but now that my responsibility is more direct my knowledge is more complete, and my opportunities of acquiring information are greater. While I think that, on the whole, the Post Office scales of pay are just, and even rather generous, and that it is quite possible that an inquiry might show that in some cases they are too high, it is also clear that in some cases they might not be justified, and I do not believe that a Minister of the Crown derogates from his own authority, or the dignity of the House, by seeking advice from those who are competent to give it. The course I propose to adopt will not lessen my responsibility, but will enable me to come to a decision, with the concurrence of the Treasury, in the light of fuller information. I intend to give the names of the Committee to the House as soon as they are complete, but I think it inadvisable to submit their names to be voted on by the House. I decline to ask busy men to give their time to the public service in this way, with the condition that their names shall first be submitted. If the names I submit do not meet with the approval of the House, it will be for the House to express its want of confidence in me. I think it would be impossible to get men of the authority and position I hope to secure, unless the scope of the inquiry is kept within reasonable bounds. Having once come to a conclusion as to the proper scales of pay for the classes I have named, it will be comparatively easy for the Postmaster-General to decide as to the other standards.

My hon. friend the Member for Tunbridge has raised the question of extending the facilities for the collection of parcels in the rural districts. I understand my hon. friend to suggest that postmen, delivering in rural districts, should be empowered to sell stamps and to accept letters and parcels; but a postman in a rural district does these things now, although, of course, he cannot carry more than a certain weight. It is one thing for a postman to accept parcels and letters offered to him on his round and another thing to say that, whether he has letters to deliver at a house or not, he shall call to see whether there is anything to send away. That will be a very large undertaking. It could not be carried out with the present staff, and would utterly disorganise the delivery of letters. If, however, he could see his way to further development, he should not be slow to adopt it. As to the suggestion that extra facilities should be given for the carriage of parcels of agricultural produce the late Mr. Hanbury, with whom I discussed this matter, was unable to suggest a scheme, and I can only say that if I can possibly find one I shall not be unwilling to adopt it. The hon. Member for Leicester has asked me as to the question of special leave of absence. I dealt with that subject fully last year. At the present time working postmen have fourteen days' holiday on full pay in the year. In addition to that, subject to the necessities of the moment, they may have ten days' special leave with pay, if they apply for it, on their providing a substitute. Is not that reasonable leave as compared with what working men in other employments are allowed? I think it is very generous, and I do not hold it is right to give any further concession in that direction. On that point I have given my final reply to the Post Office officials. Seeing that we have had ample discussion may I appeal to the Committee to allow us to get the Vote, especially as no reduction has been moved.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) regretted that the right hon. Gentleman, in endeavouring to make a case against the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, should have introduced the question of the inspection of conventual institutions. The argument was not well founded, because the hon. Member had never objected to the sanitary inspection of convents. The right hon. Gentleman had asserted that when complaints were made as to insanitation they were brought immediately under his notice and attention given to them, but he could assure him that in the City of Dublin that was not the case. Time after time the attention of the Sanitary Officer of the City had been drawn to the condition of the Post Office, and he had replied that he had no power to enter on Government premises. Why should not such premises be equally open to inspection with private workshops? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had met the claim of the men in anything like a fair or generous manner. The inquiry promised had reference only to the question of pay. But there were other grievances which ought to be considered, and amongst them the cases of favouritism in promotion which so often occurred. As to the character of the Committee he would like to know if, in the case of a dispute between employers and employees, any employer would agree to the matter being referred to a body of workmen outside the trade to settle? The effect of the hon. Gentleman's action would be to delay the removal of grievances, and therefore he held that the scope of the inquiry ought to be widened. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman that there was seething discontent in the Dublin Post Office, and the Lord Mayor and citizens had agreed that the officials were not well treated. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Postmaster-General.—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said that though many of them who had taken an interest in this question for many years might be disappointed at the decision arrived at by the Postmaster-General, he still thought that the Committee marked distinctly a step in advance. Hitherto there had been an obdurate refusal on the part of Postmasters-General to consider the claims brought forward by the postal establishment for an inquiry into various matters of which they complained, and although the proposed Committee might not altogether satisfy the postal clerks, he felt it would result in placing before the House a great amount of evidence which would lead to further inquiry into the conditions under which the postal service was administered. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered questions put to him in the course of the debate as to why certain classes were to be exempted from the

the Army Act, and which might be expected to have novel results."

Nor, my Lords, can I allow to pass unnoticed the Duke of Northumberland's more objectionable insinuation that I had laid myself open to a "sinister suggestion" in not adopting what the noble Duke is pleased to assert is "the usual course." My Lords, I was absolutely ignorant of the object for which Lord De Saumarez sought an interview with me. If it had turned out that the tale he had to tell was one of an ordinary case of what is termed "ragging," I might possibly have followed what the Duke of Northumberland describes as "the usual, the plain, and the straightforward course," and have told Lord De Saumarez that "if the officers have anything to complain of, let them make their report to the commanding officer of the battalion, and if he cannot satisfy them, let the complaint be forwarded to me." But when Lord De Saumarez informed me that the young officers who refused to submit to the punishment awarded them by the subalterns' Courts-martial described their life as "a reign of terror," and that they considered it hopeless to expect protection from the regimental authorities, who, they believed, approved of the system, I decided to send for the General Officer commanding the Home District and tell him what I had heard. This, my Lords, was in my opinion the proper and straightforward course to adopt. I must also refer, my Lords, to the letter which appeared in *The Times* of February 14th last, signed by three noble Lords — the Duke of Northumberland, Earl Stanhope, and Viscount Duncannon — "fathers of subalterns who have lately served under Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards," in which they—

> "wish to state most emphatically that the picture of the 'reign of terror' stated to exist in that battalion is absolutely overdrawn and exaggerated."

My Lords, I do not know whether these three noble Lords were in possession of as full and complete evidence as to what had taken place in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards as I was when they wrote that letter; if they were, I can only say that their statement as to the picture of the reign of terror being absolutely overdrawn and exaggerated is not in accordance with the evidence placed before me. And it is beyond my power to understand how three noble Lords could be content that such a state of things should be allowed to exist in a regiment to which their sons belonged. If the noble Lords were not in possession of the whole facts, I must express my astonishment that they should have taken a step so absolutely subversive of discipline. I am glad, my Lords, to have this opportunity of telling the three noble Lords that I most emphatically disagree with them, and that I am determined, so long as I am Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Army, not to allow practices to continue which I can only describe as disgusting and degrading. My Lords, I never had the slightest intention of making light of any misconduct on the part of the younger officers which may have called for the condemnation of their brother subalterns or the censure of their colonel. Such condemnation and such censure would have my highest approval, and I should have considered them as signs of a healthy tone in the battalion. I will not weary your Lordships, however, with details connected with the conduct of these young officers; but I cannot, in justice to Second-Lieutenant Leveson-Gower, allow the Duke of Bedford's remarks, so damning to that young officer's character, to pass without comment. In my opinion Second-Lieutenant Leveson-Gower cannot justly be accused of making false statements about his commanding officer. Second-Lieutenant Leveson-Gower was under the impression that Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch had expressed his intention of making him over to the senior subaltern to be dealt with, and he said so under the *bonâ fide* conviction that such was the case. On Lieut.-Colonel Kinloch's absolutely denying that he had made use of words conveying such a meaning, Second-Lieutenant Leveson-Gower accepted this denial, as in common courtesy to his colonel he was bound to do, and withdrew his statement accordingly. Such, my Lords, was surely the proper course to pursue; and I cannot admit, as an abstract question, that a young officer, having apologised for a statement made under a wrong impression, can justly be accused of making "false statements." My Lords, I have told my story, and I earnestly hope I have made it clear to your Lordships that throughout this intensely disagreeable affair I have acted not only strictly in accordance with the regulations as laid down by Act of Parliament for the administration of the Army, but also in accordance with what I conceive to be the best interests of that Army, and that in carrying out a most painful duty I have been influenced by no ignoble motives, but have worked solely for the good of the service and the upholding of those honourable traditions of the British Army which it ought to be every soldier's highest aim to preserve unsullied.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I think I need make no apology for rising immediately after the noble and gallant Earl who has just sat down, considering that he has brought my name prominently before your Lordships. He was not here last week when the remarks to which he has taken exception were made, and I can assure him that if he had been here he would have felt that there was no intention on my part to impugn, in the slightest degree, his most absolute fairness. What I said was this, that those who had not very delicate feelings of honour were apt to attribute bad motives, perfectly falsely, to those who, apparently without any reason, took courses which were not the usual courses. What I was referring to was not so much the noble and gallant Lord's conduct as the conduct of the Secretary of State, who waxed very indignant over the fact that such charges were made; and I said that though the indignation of the Secretary of State might so far have been justified, for these accusations, as we all knew, had no foundation in fact, yet he could not be very much surprised if they were made, considering the very unusual course that had been adopted in this case. I hope the noble and gallant Earl will feel that in saying that I made no reflection whatever upon his honour and the motives which actuated him in the discharge of his duty.

The noble and gallant Earl took exception to the letter, which I, in company with two other noble Lords, sent to *The Times* some time ago. The reason I signed that letter was this. My son had been under Colonel Kinloch's command some two or three years ago. I had had experience of the extreme kindness and interest which Colonel Kinloch took in his young officers, and I thought, when asked whether I would join with others in testifying to this, that I could not in fairness to Colonel Kinloch refuse to do so. I do not wish to enter into a controversy with the noble and gallant Earl as to whether a "reign of terror" is, or is not, a true description of what went on in the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, but I think that in the circumstances your Lordships will hold that I was justified, in the letter I sent to *The Times*, in testifying to my own experience of Colonel Kinloch and the gratitude which I felt to him for his kindness to my son.

Now I come to the main issue. I think the Commander-in-Chief has put a totally different question to your Lordships from anything which I or the noble Duke behind me have ever brought before the House, for he has actually asked the House whether he would have been justified in retaining Colonel Kinloch in his position. That is a question which I would never have thought of submitting, for I feel most strongly that the decisions of the heads of the Army with regard to officers are not proper subjects for discussion in this House. I never would be a party to making this House a Court of Appeal from decisions with regard to officers in the Army, but I do think this House has a right—indeed, I think it is its duty—to see that those decisions are arrived at by proper constitutional methods, and, if the means and manner of arriving at those decisions are wrong, the House should ask to be fully informed with regard to them. Before I go any farther, let me say one word with regard to what I do not think was a fair interpretation on the part of the Commander-in-Chief of a remark which fell from the noble Duke behind me. The noble and gallant Lord suggested that the noble Duke behind me inferred that Colonel Kinloch's word was not to be accepted because it was not on oath. I have heard the question asked over and over again in civil cases, "Was this inquiry conducted on oath?" and the importance of the inquiry is largely measured by that fact. But I pass from this personal matter to one question which the noble and gallant Earl touched upon, but which I cannot think he fully answered, and I make no apology for mentioning it again, because the speech of the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War emphasised very much the importance of it. I asked in the House last Tuesday—

> "Why did the noble and gallant Earl not take the ordinary course of telling these junior officers to send in their complaints through their commanding officers?"

That is not merely the usual course; it is a course absolutely laid down by the Regulations, which provide that—

> "If any officer who thinks himself wronged by his commanding officer, and on due application to him does not receive the redress to which he may consider himself entitled, he may complain to the Commander-in-Chief in order to obtain justice, who is hereby required to examine into the case, and through the Secretary of State for War to make his Report to His Majesty in order to receive the orders of His Majesty thereon."

In the "Manual of Military Law," which is printed by authority of the War Office, this note is added to this section—

> "It is the custom of the service to forward every complaint through the officer commanding the regiment, and an officer would not be justified in deviating from this course unless the commanding officer refused or unreasonably delayed to forward. An officer complaining himself to the general in command should apprise his commanding officer of his doing so, and must observe in all channels of approach to the Commander-in-Chief each intermediate gradation as a general of brigade or division."

These are the rules of the service, and the noble and gallant Earl admits that on the present occasion he has given the go-by absolutely to these rules. What are the noble and gallant Earl's reasons? His reasons are that he gathered that the state of things was so bad in the Brigade of Guards that officers' complaints would not have been forwarded by the commanding officer. That is a very serious charge to make against the commanding officer, but I submit that the answer is perfectly plain. The fathers of these officers had come to complain of the bullying to which their sons were subjected, and the Commander-in-Chief could perfectly well have said to them, "Tell your sons to send their complaints to me through the proper channels, according to the regulations of the Army, and if the commanding officer refuses to forward them or puts any obstacle in the way of their being forwarded, then come and complain to me." He could then have put in force the whole machinery which he actually did put into operation.

The importance of this point is very much accentuated by what fell from the noble Earl the Under Secretary. The noble Earl asked: What is the Commander-in-Chief to do if a complaint is made in the newspapers about the conduct of an officer? Does the noble Earl really suggest that the position of any officer in the Army is at the mercy of the canards which appear in the newspapers? I should have thought that newspaper reports might very well be disregarded by those who are in responsible positions, but I again ask why the Commander-in-Chief should not, if he really thinks that newspaper reports are sufficiently important to act upon, get hold of the man who made the complaint and tell him to make it through the commanding officer? That is the method laid down in the Act of Parliament and in the regulations of the service; and I humbly protest against the Commander-in-Chief, or the Secretary of State, or any one else, over-riding and disregarding the law of the land and the regulations of the service. The observations of the noble Earl the Under Secretary with regard to this report remind me of the riddle we used to hear in our youth, "When is a lady's shoulder not a lady's shoulder?" and the question now appears to be, "When is a report not a report?" The Section provides that—

> "The Court will be guided by the written instructions of the officer who assembled the Court. The instructions shall be full and explicit, and state the general character of the information required from the Court in their report."

The instructions are to be full and specific, and state the general character of the information required from the Court in their report. However, I do not think it is worth while detaining your Lordships upon the question whether this is a report or not.

I pass to one remark which fell from the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack the other night, and which is rather important, I think, to the bearing of this question. As I understood the noble and learned Earl, he said there could not be a better ground for the conviction of a man than his own evidence. Well, my Lords, I do not know about that. Some time ago we had a Bill before Parliament to enable persons to give evidence on their own behalf, and a great many people doubted extremely whether the evidence given by a person was the best evidence against him. I am not going to put my opinion on legal matters against that of the noble and learned Earl, but I should like to ask him this. Suppose a judge is trying a case and one of the witnesses says something in the course of his evidence which is practically an admission of an offence. Having given his evidence, the witness, thinking he has nothing more to do with the trial, goes home. Would a judge be right in sending immediately for that man, and, without giving him any opportunity of calling witnesses, or of explaining—I will not say of explaining because the noble and gallant Earl says that Colonel Kinloch had an opportunity of explaining—but without giving him any opportunity of calling witnesses—would a judge be justified in those circumstances in committing him to prison? The noble and learned Earl knows perfectly well that he would be entitled to a fresh trial. He might plead "not guilty" if he chose; he might explain away in any manner he liked his evidence; but he would not be convicted upon evidence given as a witness in a case affecting other people. There cannot, of course, be an absolute parallel, because civil and military procedure is so very different, but that is as near as possible a parallel case to Colonel Kinloch's. Colonel Kinloch appeared before this Court of Inquiry as a witness, and the noble Lord himself emphasises the remark that he could not claim to be there the whole while. Yet on his evidence as a witness he is treated as a criminal. That may be military law but it is most monstrously unjust, and the sooner the military law is changed, if such things are possible, the better. What is the summing up of the whole case? First of all, an officer who has seen a good deal of service, who has behaved hitherto with credit, is complained against by the parents of two officers who think their sons have not been well treated, much in the same way as two fathers would go to the headmaster of a school and complain of the treatment of their sons. This commanding officer is not informed of any charge against him whatever, but is asked to give evidence before a Court of Inquiry as to the conduct of some subalterns, and, having given that evidence—evidence which, as the noble Duke behind me pointed out, it is particularly laid down cannot be used against him in any proceedings, and therefore which he is safe, apparently, in giving—it is taken advantage of, and the officer is condemned on his own evidence without any chance of calling witnesses, of being present at the Inquiry, or of availing himself of the other safeguards which the law intended should obtain in these cases. The whole of the proceedings remind me very unpleasantly of some trials in foreign countries. It does not seem to me that this sort of method is English or fair. I again repeat, before sitting down, that I have not for one moment questioned the decision at which the Commander-in-Chief arrived, but I do say that these methods are most undesirable. I believe them to be unconstitutional, but if they are not unconstitutional they should be so, or else the Army is no longer a profession for an officer. He is a mere puppet, at the will and disposal of any Commander-in-Chief who pleases to dismiss him, and he has practically no redress. This is called a "Guards Scandal." It is a very ugly story, but I cannot think that the greater part of the scandal lies with the Grenadier Guards.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, I think it may not be inadvisable that one Member of your Lordships' House who is not connected with the Government, with the Army, or with the regiment concerned, and who stands totally apart from all these proceedings, should state, from the administrative point of view, how the case strikes him. It has fallen to my lot for two separate spells of some years to preside over the

Admiralty, and I have had duties to perform there with reference to the short-comings of officers. I have had the opportunity of seeing whether it would be wise to tie the hands of the administrating authority with such meshes of regulations as to prevent them from removing an officer whom they did not consider competent for a particular post. Both of the noble Dukes who have spoken on this subject have accentuated, and properly accentuated, the rights and privileges of officers, but it is important that the privileges of the public, and of the Administration who are responsible for the efficiency of the Army and the Navy, should also be accentuated. Much has been made of the action of the two noble Lords who went to the Commander-in-Chief and informed him that a certain scandal had taken place. The noble Duke who spoke last thinks it was incredible that on such information an immediate inquiry should be made. Well, I will say that if the humblest parent of a sub-lieutenant in the Navy had come to me and told me that his son had been treated in the disgraceful and disgusting way in which some of the officers in the Guards' Regiment had been treated, I should immediately have proceeded not to refer the matter back to the ship, but to call for a report from the captain of ship, or have taken some other means to have an inquiry made.

The Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND: The captain of a ship corresponds with the colonel of a regiment.

Viscount GOSCHEN: The parallel is precise. It was to Major-General Trotter that the Commander-in-Chief referred the matter.

The Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND: Major-General Trotter was not the head of the regiment. Colonel Kinloch was the head of the regiment, and I think the colonel of a regiment would correspond with the captain of a ship.

Viscount GOSCHEN: This shows the quasi-legal way in which both noble Dukes treat this question. They say a ship is not a regiment. What I take is the general common sense view, is that when you hear of a great scandal you take the readiest means to get at the bottom of it. I do not propose to concern myself with these points, which have been argued in such detail. The noble Dukes say that there is a scandal in the conduct of the Court of Inquiry, and they hold the Commander-in-Chief responsible even for such questions as whether a copy was or was not sent, or whether or not the evidence was taken upon oath. I do not know sufficient of the case to know whether the Adjutant-General, or the General Officer commanding the Home District, committed errors in that way; but that the Commander-in-Chief should be almost summoned to the Bar of this House, on account of some small legal difficulties which cannot influence the case, is to be regretted in the interests of discipline in the Army. The case is as simple as possible. The noble Duke has not told us what possible matters might have come out at a further examination. A certain number of Courts-martial have been held, followed by punishments, the record of which, I do not hesitate to say, has outraged public opinion. Those who are acquainted with the regiment, those who say that for years such things have happened there, do not count, I think, that, in the general opinion of the public, for officers of twenty-one years of age to be treated as the officers in question were treated, was a scandal of the gravest kind. It is known that that was the case. It is not denied. If there had been no Court of Inquiry at all that fact would have been known; and what could further inquiry have elicited? The point reduces itself to this: Did Colonel Kinloch know, or did he not know? That seems to me to be the only question that could be at issue. If it had been proved that Colonel Kinloch knew of these proceedings, then I am not certain what course the Commander-in-Chief might not have thought it necessary to take, and whether one of the other alternatives that he mentioned would not have been more natural in such a case. We accept the fact that the colonel of the regiment did not know. But he ought to have known. That is important, I think, not only for officers, but also for the general public to consider. If a practice of this kind goes on for a certain time in a regiment, is the organisation of that regiment what it ought to be, and is the control of the officers what it ought to be, if no hint of such proceedings reaches the colonel commanding the battalion? Is not the colonel responsible for not being sufficiently in touch with the officers in his regiment, and can the Commander-in-Chief be satisfied with his conduct and position in that regiment? That seems to me to be the common-sense issue. Both noble Dukes have spoken of the matter as if the Commander-in-Chief and a judge were in a similar position. The fact is, both noble Dukes have faced the question simply from what I may call the legal point of view. But the Commander-in-Chief is an administrator. A judge's duty finishes when he has heard the evidence and pronounced sentence, but the Commander-in-Chief is responsible for the administration of the Army. Colonel Kinloch was not tried for any misconduct, but the general proceedings of the Court of Inquiry revealed an unsatisfactory state of things in the regiment, and, as I understand, sentence was pronounced on that evidence, the Commander-in-Chief coming to the conclusion that it was desirable that Colonel Kinloch should be removed from his command. The Duke of Bedford has questioned not only the general powers of the Commander-in-Chief acting by Court of Inquiry, but, as I understood him, he questioned even the use of the Royal Warrant, under which the Commander-in-Chief is entitled to remove an officer for other reasons than misconduct. The noble Duke thinks that this was not a case for the exercise of the Royal Warrant. The Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State must surely be allowed to retain the power of dismissing an officer for other reasons than misconduct, and, in a certain sense, in an arbitrary way. Without that power there cannot be efficiency. It is the most painful part of the duty of an administrator, and when my noble friend the Commander-in-Chief is blamed, as he has been blamed, and called to account, as he has been called to account, his accusers—for I must call them so—do not appear to realise that he must have passed through intense pain and sorrow when he had to remove a colonel with the distinction of Colonel Kinloch from his command. I speak with a certain sense of experience, because I know what it is when one has to deal with officers of blameless record up to a certain point, and when the exigencies of the service require strenuous and vigorous treatment.

I should like to be allowed to recall to your Lordships' attention a case in which I took part thirty years ago, in the very first year that I presided over the Admiralty. A disaster had taken place, a ship had gone aground, and the captain of the ship and two other officers were tried. The captain was censured and severely reprimanded, but he was not removed from his ship. But when the proceedings of the Court-martial came to be reviewed by the Board of Admiralty they thought that the situation was such that they must take vigorous action. I have to-day looked up the Minute of the Board of Admiralty, which was as follows—

> "Perusal of the evidence satisfies my Lords that the material facts connected with the stranding of the ship were fully brought out, and that no further inquiry is necessary. They have, therefore, after careful deliberation, come to a conclusion on the whole case. That conclusion is that, with a view to impressing upon all officers in command the necessity for the utmost vigilance and unremitting attention to the navigation of the ships entrusted to their care, my Lords are constrained to mark their sense of the grave default on the occasion by directing the Vice-Admiral of the Channel Squadron to strike his flag."

At the same time the Rear-Admiral was directed to strike his flag. These two officers in high command were removed by the Admiralty, after the greatest possible anxiety as to their case, because they held that the efficiency of the service required that they should mark their sense of the default and want of attention which had been shown. If at that time there had been critics like the two noble Dukes who have taken the Commander-in-Chief to task to-day, I think I should have had to recall that I passed through a time even sadder than that through which the Commander-in-Chief has passed during the last few weeks. But the gallant officer in command of the Channel Squadron who had to strike his flag held, with an officer's sense of discipline, that he was responsible because he had been in command of the Fleet, and was responsible for the action of his subordinates, or for any *laches* on his own part; and, without calling for a Court-martial, and without a murmur, he bent to his fate, showing a splendid example of naval discipline. That officer was afterwards sent to a high command and served his country faithfully. This act of default did not ruin him any more than Colonel Kinloch will be ruined for ever by being temporarily put on half-pay because he had not shown sufficient capacity for grappling with the conditions of the Guards regiment in London. That is a sentence that has never been passed on him so far as I understand, and one which I hope never will be passed under such circumstances. It is a temporary removal from his command; and it is perfectly conceivable that from an administrative point of view, a man who exercised the highest authority for leading a regiment in action or generally in a campaign would not necessarily be the best officer to deal with all the intricacies of the garrison in London, just as those who may be the best administrators in peace may not be the best administrators in war. Therefore, while I have spoken strongly from the point of view of the rights of an administrator to deal summarily with a matter of this kind, yet I must say that nothing I have heard or read diminishes, in the slightest degree, my respect for Colonel Kinloch as an officer generally, or my hope that on some other occasion the War Office may find means of utilising his services in command.

Terrible difficulty will be imposed on the War Office and on the Commander-in-Chief, and possibly upon other administrators, if this system is to continue, and if, the moment an officer feels that he is aggrieved, even if he is justly aggrieved, the whole of his friends, or the whole of the critics of the Administration should rush at once into the columns of the newspapers. I cannot but think that if these attacks are to be made in both Houses of Parliament the task of the Commander-in-Chief will be greater than even it is at present. Although the noble Duke the Duke of Bedford is a sincere and zealous army reformer, I doubt if he will not undo much of the benefit that he may secure in the way of efficiency, if by such proceedings as these he should shake the authority and the discipline of the Army itself. No one can deny that these proceedings are most detrimental. It is worse in London, I am afraid, than anywhere else. These Admirals were on a distant Mediterranean station. When, however, anything happens to a famous regiment quartered in London, Society takes it up and every social influence is set at work in order to neutralise the effect which the Commander-in-Chief and the War Office desire to produce by the action they take. I assure your Lordships that if I have intervened in the debate it is only owing to the sense which forty years of experience of public life has imposed upon me of the necessity of maintaining the discipline of the two great services to which the country as a whole looks for its strength and safety.

LORD HARRIS: My Lords, may I add one word in support of what has fallen from the noble Viscount, but from an entirely different point of view. The noble Viscount deprecates the publicity that is given to painful cases of this kind. What I deprecate quite as strongly, and perhaps still more strongly, is that your Lordships' House should be used by officers holding His Majesty's commission for challenging the decision of the Commander-in-Chief. I am quite aware that the noble Duke deprecated the idea that he had come here to challenge the disciplinary authority of the Commander-in-Chief, but I leave it to your Lordships to say what the effect upon your minds is of the speeches that have been delivered by the two noble Dukes. To my mind, they sounded like a distinct challenge of the disciplinary authority of the Commander-in-Chief, and I think the Commander-in-Chief's presence here to-night, and the tone that animated his speech, are sufficient indication of how he regards the matter. Some years ago I challenged the attempt to draw a distinction between a commission in the Regular Forces and a commission in the Auxiliary Forces, and I was successful in my contention. The noble Duke who initiated this discussion holds a command in the Militia, and I deprecate in the strongest terms an officer holding an important position of that kind in the Auxiliary Forces, taking advantage of the privileges of Parliament to challenge the disciplinary decisions of the Commander-in-Chief. If it is permissible for a commanding officer in the

Auxiliary Forces to challenge the disciplinary decisions of the Commander-in-Chief, it would seem to be equally open to a subordinate officer of the Auxiliary Forces having a seat in Parliament, to challenge any disciplinary decisions of his colonel. The whole object of the authority which is given to the Commander-in-Chief, and to commanders of units, will, it seems to me, be imperilled if noble Lords are encouraged to take the opportunity of membership of this House to call in question the decisions of the Commander-in-Chief on military matters.

Lord BLYTHSWOOD: My Lords, I should not have risen but for the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down. The noble Duke who initiated this discussion deprecated from the very first the introduction of the name of Colonel Kinloch. He has not taken up a position either for or against Colonel Kinloch. What the noble Duke has contended, and, I believe, rightly contended, is that in this case the Army Regulations have not been complied with. If it is thought necessary by the Commander-in-Chief, or anybody else in authority, that the regulations should be changed, let them be changed; but at all events let us know what is our position as officers in the Army, and do not let us have red herrings drawn across the path.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): My Lords, I only join for a moment in the debate as a matter of courtesy, having been referred to by the noble Duke, the Duke of Northumberland. I think the noble Duke has been misled in attempting to draw a comparison between this case and the procedure in Courts of Justice. In dealing with the disciplinary power of the Commander-in-Chief, I think the noble Duke has, in this respect, made a grievous error. The facts have no relation to the procedure in a Court of law. If I had a person in my employment who himself admitted that he had been stealing my goods I should not wait for procedure in a court of Justice, or any other procedure, before I dismissed him.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 4th May, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—

Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.—

Life Association of Scotland Bill [Lords]; Faversham Gas Bill [Lords]; Hexham Gas Bill [Lords]; Lima Railway Bill [Lords]; India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [Lords]; North Navigation Collieries Bill [Lords]; Exeter Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

Great Central Railway Bill—As amended, considered; Amendments made. Bill to be read the third time.

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [Lords]; London County Council (General Powers) Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

London County Council (Money) Bill, read a second time, and committed.

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill, considered; to be read the third time upon Wednesday.

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill, reported, with Amendments Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 4).

Mr. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills; That the parties opposing the Romford and District Tramways Bill had stated that the evidence of William Creasy, Superintendent of Police, Romford; Herbert W. Gibson, Deputy Clerk of the Essex County Council; and Percy J. Sheldon, Surveyor to the Essex County Council, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said William Creasy, Herbert W. Gibson, and Percy J. Sheldon do attend the said Committee on Thursday, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That William Creasy, Herbert W. Gibson, and Percy J. Sheldon do attend the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills on Thursday, at half-past eleven of the clock.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

Mr. NICOL reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills, That the parties promoting the Thames Steamboat Trust Bill had stated that the evidence of Robert Baggalay, 9, Fenchurch Street, E.C., Consulting Engineer, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Robert Baggalay do attend the said Committee to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Robert Baggalay do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill, reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]'; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to construct additional dock works on the Liverpool side of the River Mersey; to amend in certain respects the Acts relating to that Board; and for other purposes." [Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Company; and for other purposes." [Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [Lords].

HOUSE OF LORDS (MANUSCRIPTS).

That they communicate Copy of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume II. (New Series), as desired by this House.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords], Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [Lords], read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

Petition from Elford, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Rotherham (No. 2); Holbrook; West Kiveton; Hucknall (No. 1); Senghenydd; Hednesford; West Cannock (No. 3); Cannock Chase; Jerome (No. 11) Pit; Garforth; Mow Cop; Hucknall (No. 2); Newton; and, Pontllanfraith Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Logie Pert; and, Auchterhouse; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES RENEWAL AND TRANSFER BILL.

Petition from North Lambeth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIBEL BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Dumfries; Ancrum; Glasgow; and, Jedburgh; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Seaton; Elford; Reading (two); and, Charlton on Otmoor; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

Petition from Paddington, against (praying to be heard by Counsel); to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Peterborough; and, Badminton; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Glasgow; Dundee; and, Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Petition from Greenock, against; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Rotherham (No. 2); West Kiveton; Holbrook; Senghenydd; Newton; Hednesford; Cannock Chase; Jerome (No. 11) Pit; Garforth; Mow Cop; Hucknall (No. 2); Hucknall (No. 1); and, Pontllanfraith Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (LICENCES REFUSED).

Return presented, relative thereto [address 17th March, Mr. Cochrane]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.]

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a licence to be at large granted to Herbert Arthur Greene, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a licence to be at large granted to Alfred Edwards, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1901. Part. II. Scientific Investigations [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Four Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland with respect to the Urban County Districts of Bangor, Carrick-on-Suir, and Tullamore [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (CONTRIBUTIONS BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 9th March; Mr. Trevelyan]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 142.)

SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN AND WAR CONTRIBUTION (GUARANTEE).

Committee to consider of authorising the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments (King's Recommendation signified), upon Wednesday.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Proposed Refreshment Kiosk at Hampton Court Palace.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether the Office of Works will arrange to erect a refreshment kiosk in the grounds adjacent to Hampton Court Palace, similar to that already provided for visitors to Kew Gardens.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The First Commissioner has personally examined the ground at Hampton Court, and is satisfied that abundant facilities for obtaining refreshment already exist within reasonable reach of the Palace, and that there is no necessity to erect a kiosk for that purpose. The matter will be carefully watched, and should it be found that the accommodation is inadequate the First Commissioner will go into the question again.

Mosely Mission—Publication of Reports.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can arrange with the chief of the Mission for the publication, at a nominal price, of the reports of the trades union leaders who accompanied Mr. Mosely, C.M.G., on his visit to the industrial centres of the United States.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have communicated with Mr. Mosely, who is willing to issue an edition of his reports at the nominal price of 6d. per copy. Arrangements are being made by the Board of Trade to distribute a large number of copies to persons and bodies likely to be interested in the subject.

Construction of Pier at Aultbea, Ross-shire.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the fact that application has been made to the Board of Trade for powers to construct a pier or quay at Aultbea, Ross-shire, is he now in a position to say what decision has been arrived at on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Board of Trade have made a Provisional Order authorising the construction of a pier at Aultbea, and when it has been advertised it will be submitted to Parliament for confirmation.

Registration of Postal Packets—Payment of Compensation.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that while the public are permitted to use the Post Office for transmission of valuable property in a cover duly registered the Post Office authorities refuse compensation when the contents are stolen in transit and the cover only is delivered at its destination, he will state why the public are not warned of this non-liability of the Post Office by a statement in the rules or on the registered receipts; whether he will state the number and amount of claims made against the Post Office during the past five years, with all particulars in respect of valuable property abstracted from registered covers while in Post Office custody; and whether he will supply a list of particulars of decisions in courts of law respecting the liability or non-liability of the Post Office under such circumstances.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) If the hon. Member is alluding to the Inland service of the United Kingdom, it is not the fact that compensation is refused when the contents of a registered letter are stolen in transit and the cover only is delivered at the place of destination. In such cases payment is made not as a matter of legal liability but as an act of grace, within certain limits and subject to certain conditions which are set forth on the official certificates of posting, and at pages 13 to 17 of the Post Office Guide. In the International post, which is regulated by the Postal Union Convention, there is no liability to compensate in the case of a registered but uninsured packet unless it is entirely lost, in which case an indemnity of fifty francs is payable. Nevertheless, in this country compensation up to that amount would be granted for the loss of contents if it were clear that such loss had occurred while the packet was in the custody of the British Post Office. I regret that I cannot undertake to supply the hon. Member with particulars of all claims and losses of the kind which have arisen during the last five years. It is provided by Section 3 of the Post Office Act, 1875, that the registration of a postal packet shall not render the Postmaster-General or the postal revenue liable for the loss of any such packet or the contents thereof.

Promotion in the Brighton Post Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why a woman telegraphist from Beckenham has been placed in charge of the branch office at

St. James' Street, Brighton, to the disadvantage of the Brighton female staff, seeing that the clerk promoted has performed counter duties for ten years, whilst the Brighton telegraphists have been performing these duties since the office was staffed by women.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave to the hon. Member on this subject on the 7th ultimo.†

National Expenditure—Extra Expenditure on Account of War.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how much of the expenditure in 1902–3 of £184,484,000 was expenditure on account of the war and how much was ordinary expenditure, calculated on the same basis as the war, and ordinary expenditure for 1901–2, given on page 2 of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.136 of Session 1902, dividing the war expenditure into the three items there detailed.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The Exchequer issues in 1902–3, amounting to £184,484,000, comprised ordinary and war expenditure as follows -- Total ordinary expenditure, £129,352,000; war expenditure as estimated: interest on war debt, £4,282,000; Army Votes, £40,000,000; Civil Service Votes, £10,850,000; total war expenditure as estimated, £55,132,000 — total, £184,484,000. The estimated charge of £40,000,000 on Army Votes includes £350,000 for China. The war charge of £10,850,000 on Civil Votes includes the sum of £3,000,000 issued as a temporary advance to the Governments of the new colonies, repayable out of the proceeds of the Guaranteed Loan.

Transvaal Compensation and Loan.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer from what funds the £5,000,000, estimated to be required for payment by the Imperial Government to the Transvaal, in respect of claims for compensation arising under the proclamations promising protection issued by Lord Roberts and other Generals, has been or will be met; and what items, voted in respect of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (and on what dates voted), are included in the sum of £4,000,000 to be repaid by the Transvaal out of the Transvaal Loan.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The £5,000,000 referred to in the first part of the Question is a rough estimate, and towards this sum £3,000,000 is provided from Army funds (£1,000,000 in 1902–3, and £2,000,000 in 1903–4), and the balance is to be provided from the proceeds of the Transvaal Guaranteed Loan. Of the £4,000,000 referred to in the latter part of the Question, £3,000,000 is the repayable portion of the grant-in-aid voted on the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates of July, 1901, and the balance represents in round figures a claim by the War Office in connection with capital expenditure on railways.

Exchequer Bonds.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to pay off or renew the whole, or any part, of the £10,000,000 Exchequer Bonds, that are repayable in August of the present year.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I think it would be premature to decide at present.

Output of Lymph by Local Government Board.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of tubes of glycerinated calf lymph produced during the last financial year at the Local Government Board's vaccine station.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Seven hundred and ninety-nine thousand and ninety-two tubes of glycerinated calf lymph were issued by the Local Government Board during the financial year 1902–3.

Private Establishments for Smallpox Patients.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of private establishments for the reception of smallpox patients within the county of London area; are they subject to inspection, and, if so, by whom.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxx., 1242.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am am not aware that there are any private establishments in London for the reception of smallpox patients.

Dogs found by the Police—Cost of Keep.

Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a sum of £38 7s. 6d. was realised by a sale by auction at Aldridge's on 24th April, of lost dogs seized by the police; and, if so, will he say whether this amount is in excess of the cost of the keep of the dogs during the time they have been in the hands of the police; and if so, to what purpose the balance has been applied.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The cost of keeping the dogs at the Dogs' Home, added to the charges in connection with their sale, exceeded by £4 18s. the amount realised by their sale at auction.

Convicts as Witnesses—Improved fare.

Mr. GUTHRIE (Tower Hamlets, Bow): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that convicts called as witnesses receive the ordinary prison diet whilst in attendance at the Courts of Justice; and whether, considering the strain to which they are subjected by prolonged cross-examination, he can take steps to revise the prison regulations in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The case can be met without altering the existing rules. I have authorised the governors of prisons to arrange that convicts giving evidence in a court of law shall be allowed some special addition to their diet if, in the particular circumstances, the ordinary diet is insufficient.

Re-arrest of Escaped Criminal Lunatics —Case of Sheehan.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the police have taken no steps to arrest the man Sheehan, an escaped lunatic from the Dundrum Criminal Asylum, seeing that the Rathduff police were on Sunday, 19th April, informed of this man's whereabouts.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham*). The police at Rathduff have had no opportunity to detain Sheehan. They were informed that he was in the locality; inquiry, however, satisfied the police, as well as the informant, that the latter was quite mistaken.

Irish Land Purchase Acts—Unexpended Funds.

Mr. GOULDING (Wiltshire, Devizes): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether there are any funds still available for land purchase under the Irish Land Purchase Acts, 1885 to 1901; and if so, what is the amount in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There are no funds available for advances under the Acts of 1885 to 1888. With respect to the Acts of 1891 to 1901, the estimated capitalised value of the shares of counties in the Guarantee Fund, when last ascertained, was £39,145,348 (House of Commons Paper, No. 355, of the Session of 1901). The total advances to tenant purchasers under the latter Acts amounted to £12,336,685 on the 31st March last.

Messrs Vickers, Son and Maxim, and the Fair Wages Resolution.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that at Messrs. Vickers, Son and Maxim's Brightside Works men are employed on Government work at less than the standard wages, whilst competent workmen who were in receipt of the full rate of 38s. per week have been discharged to make room for semi-skilled workmen at lower rates; and, if so, whether he will take steps to secure that the Fair Wages Resolution of this House is observed in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) On inquiry, Messrs. Vickers, Son, and Maxim state that in no case have fully rated men been discharged from the Brightside Works who are employed on Government work to make room for semi-skilled workmen at lower rates; that the standard rate of wage customary in he district or a rate above that amount is paid, in accordance with the Fair Wages' Resolution, on Government work; and that out of the total number of men employed on ordnance work 31·3 per cent. are in receipt of wages in excess of the standard rate.

Soldiers in County Asylums—Case of Private Bowers.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the case of Private C. Bowers, No. 3,835, of the 2nd Norfolk Regiment, who came home from South Africa a few months ago and almost immediately had to be taken to the Norfolk County Asylum, where he worked in the kitchen, besides contributing sixpence per day towards his keep; and whether, seeing that this man's Reserve pay has been handed over to the Norfolk County Asylum by the War Office, and in view of his position, he will state whether his treatment is in accordance with the Army Regulations; and whether he can take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed. Under the regulations no Reserve pay is issuable to a Reservist during his confinement in an asylum, and therefore no Reserve pay has been handed over to the asylum authorities.

Construction of Docks at Simonstown, South Africa—Fair Wages Resolution.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware that the contract held by Sir John Jackson and Company to build docks for the Admiralty at Simonstown, South Africa, is being carried out by low-paid workmen from Continental Europe and coolies from India, whilst British and South African workmen are being discharged; and whether, in view of the terms of the contract, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) If the hon. Member desires it, inquiry can be made of the contractor as to the nationality of the workmen he is now employing, but under the conditions of contract no restrictions are placed upon the contractors as to the wages paid to their workmen at the Cape. The usual Fair Wages Clause is included, but only refers to the wages of workmen engaged within the limits of the United Kingdom. The amount of wages paid and the source of labour supply (subject to the laws of the colony), are entirely in the hands of the contractors.

Employment of Children on Tea Estates in Ceylon.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware of the age at which Tamil children are employed on the tea estates of Ceylon, in all weathers, during a work-day of ten or eleven hours; and whether he will consider the advisability of bringing this question of their employment before the Educational Sub-Committee of the Commission on the Incidence of Taxation in Ceylon, now sitting there.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have no information as to the age at which children are employed on tea estates in Ceylon, but I will ask the Governor for a Report on the subject.

Destitute English Workmen in Canada.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that a number of men who left England for Canada on the promise of work by the Dominion Iron and Steel Company found, on arriving at St. John that the company had sufficient hands; and whether, seeing that the men upon arrival found themselves without employment, and without the means of paying their passage home again, he can make some arrangement whereby the men might be able to return home.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I am informed by the Canadian Emigration Commissioner that early in the year an application was made to him for labour of various kinds, and the assurance was given that a stated number of additional men arriving at that point would find employment awaiting them. This intimation was conveyed to a gentleman who was taking a very active interest in finding employment for artisans residing in the vicinity of Woolwich. Acting on this information, about 100 mechanics and artisans left Liverpool for St. John, New Brunswick, on their way to Sydney on or about 13th March. On arriving at St. John the men learned that the company declined to advance the transportation charges from St. John to their works at Sydney. Quite a number of them were not possessed of sufficient means to incur this additional expenditure. An intimation of the situation was cabled to the Canadian offices in London, and the Commissioner of Emigration immediately cabled to the Ottawa Government asking special co-operation with a view of making immediate provision for this party. The result was that within a few hours of this action being taken, arrangements were effected to bring all the men to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, where immediate employment was found for every one of them. The accounts which have come from the men, following immediately after their disappointment, indicate that they are abundantly satisfied with their present situations. No intimation has been received, either by the Government at Ottawa or the Commissioner of Emigration for Canada, that the men have any desire whatever to return home.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

65th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the actual strength of the 65th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, now stationed at Woolwich, at the present date, and its nominal strength; and whether it is included among the units of the 1st Army Corps.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The strength of this Battery is five officers and 84 non-commissioned officers and men, as compared with an establishment of five officers and 111 non-commissioned officers and men. This battery is not included among the units of the 1st Army Corps.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: How many guns are there to the Battery?

LORD STANLEY: I cannot say.

City of London Artillery Volunteers.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the five-inch B.L. gun allotted by the War Office to the Loughborough Junction Headquarters of the City of London Artillery Volunteers early in 1900 was not delivered until October, 1902; that it is useless for drill in consequence of a naval instead of a garrison mounting having been supplied; that a similar gun allotted in 1900 for the use of the same corps at the Tower of London is still useless for drill through deficiencies in the fittings; and whether he will see that delay does not occur in equipping the four six-inch B.L. guns recently supplied to their regiment.

LORD STANLEY: The guns which were taken over from the Navy required alterations and repairs which could not be taken in hand while the Ordnance Factories were fully occupied on services connected with the South African war. The gun issued to the headquarters of the corps being on a naval mounting adapted to land service is not useless for drill purposes. The deficiency in the case of the gun at the Tower was a yard scale; this deficiency did not render the gun useless, and the scale was supplied in January last. Mountings and stores will be issued for the six-inch guns as soon as they are available.

Donegal Artillery.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why recruiting has been stopped for the Donegal Artillery, seeing that the regiment is only at half its strength.

LORD STANLEY: The whole question of the Irish Militia Artillery and its employment in case of war is under consideration. Meanwhile it is considered advisable to suspend recruiting in certain units.

Army Corps Returns.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return respecting the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps which appears on to-day's Notice Paper.

The Return referred to is as follows—

Army (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps,—Address for Return showing the composition and effective strength of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps upon any particular day in April, 1903, in the following form:—

1st Army Corps.

	Unit.	Number of effective soldiers with the Colours, excluding recruits under 6 months' service, sick, deserters, and prisoners.	Nominal peace establishment.	Horses.	
				Strength.	Establishment.
1st Cavalry Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
Artillery (by Batteries):					
Horse	....				
	....				
	....				
Field	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Infantry:					
First Division:					
1st Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
2nd Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Second Division:					
3rd Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
4th Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
Third Division:					
5th Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				
6th Brigade ...	....				
	....				
	....				
	....				

And similarly for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Army Corps.

LORD STANLEY: I have already promised a Return, which is being prepared, covering almost the same ground as the hon. Member's proposal, and I cannot put the military authorities to the trouble of preparing two returns. The Return will be presented as a Command Paper.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: When will this Return be presented?

LORD STANLEY: I cannot say for certain, but I will use my utmost endeavour to expedite it as much as possible.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Is the noble Lord aware that the specific Return for which I am asking was promised by the Secretary for War not later than the 1st May. Can we have it in a day or two?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The noble Lord has said he will do his best to expedite it.

Indian Customs Duties.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that the 1st Seaforth Highlanders, on proceeding to India during the present year, were required to pay five per cent. *ad valorem* Customs duty on the military band instruments of the regiment, and will he state whether this duty is enforced upon all regiments proceeding on service to India, and the grounds on which the duty is imposed; and whether he can take steps to have these articles exempted in future from such duty.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As the Indian tariff regulations now stand, military band instruments are liable to Customs duty, as they are regimental and not Government property. I have been in communication with the Viceroy on the subject, and he tells me that the general question as to whether certain articles of military equipment, among which are regimental band instruments, may not fairly be exempted from import duty, is at present engaging the attention of the Indian Government. I have asked him to inform me as soon as possible as to the opinion arrived at upon the subject of my hon. friend's Question.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, when do His Majesty's Government propose to introduce the necessary measures for the alterations in the fiscal system of this country, to which they are pledged by the Brussels Sugar Convention, and especially for imposing the extra charge on the public revenue required by Article VII. of that Convention; and in what shape do they intend to propose the measures in question.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): A Bill will be introduced during the present session, but I am not prepared to name a date at present or to state beforehand what form the Bill will take.

Congo Free State.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, before the forthcoming Debate on the Congo State, it would be possible to lay before the House the recent Reports of His Majesty's representatives in Africa as to the condition of the Congo State, and especially of the territories within that State which are subject to monopoly concessions; and whether His Majesty's representatives have been instructed to make independent inquiries as to the observance or violation of the stipulations of the Berlin Conference for the protection of natives.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (LORD CRANBORNE, Rochester): There is only one British Consul for the Congo Free State. For various reasons he has been unable to travel to such an extent as to enable him to form anything like a full opinion on the condition of the State. As I stated on March 11th,† it would be premature to consider the propriety of laying Papers before Parliament. There have been no definite instructions upon the points mentioned in the last part of the Question, but they have, in fact, been the subject of repeated attention by the Consul, especially where native British subjects have been concerned.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxix., 382.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): May I ask the noble Lord if the Government will consider the desirability of appointing additional British Consuls for the Congo Free State?

LORD CRANBORNE: Yes, Sir, we shall be very glad to do so.

Morocco.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state what is the present condition of affairs in Morocco; and whether British residents at Tetuan have been warned to leave the place.

LORD CRANBORNE: The northern part of Morocco is in a condition of rather serious disturbance. According to recent information the tribes in the North and East are in a state of ferment. The country around Tangier is reported to be unsettled, and the road from that town to Tetuan to be unsafe. More recent reports are, however, less disquieting. We have not heard so far that British residents have been warned to leave Tetuan, nor does there appear to be any danger to Europeans residing at other ports.

MR. LONSDALE: Is it not proposed to give any protection to British residents in Tetuan?

LORD CRANBORNE: I do not think that any representations have been made by our responsible officials as to the necessity for that, and the Government have not therefore supposed that any protection is required; but of course the Government will watch the course of events and do what is necessary.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is there any British Consul there?

LORD CRANBORNE: No.

Later on the noble Lord corrected himself and said there was a British Vice-Consul at the place.

Royal Commission on the Disposal of Sewage.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to take any steps towards putting into effect the recommendations contained in the Third Report of the Royal Commission on the Disposal of Sewage recently laid before Parliament.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): The Report referred to has only recently been issued, and the evidence on which it is based has not yet been published. The recommendations contained in the Report involve questions of very considerable importance, and I am not at present in a position to state what course should be adopted in the matter. The subject, however, is receiving my consideration.

Shrewsbury Election Petition—Prosecutions for Corruption.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Commissioner in the Shrewsbury Election Petition reports that the mere exposure of the system of bribery, unless those responsible for finding or distributing the money are made to understand the personal danger of their proceedings, will not repress the corrupt practices prevalent; and what steps does he propose to take in the matter.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): The Director of Public Prosecutions instituted proceedings against ten persons for bribery or being parties to bribery. Of these nine have been committed for trial and one discharged by the magistrates.

The King's Visit to Paris—An Unfounded Rumour.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I wish to ask the Attorney-General a Question of which I have given him private notice. It is with reference to a circular sent by the Exchange Telegraph Company to its subscribers yesterday, to the effect that a rumour was widely prevalent in London that the King had been assassinated in Paris. I wish to ask whether the circulation of intelligence of an alarming character on a public matter, confessedly without verification, is not amenable to the criminal law.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I am sure that everyone will join with my hon. friend in deprecating the circulation of such a rumour, even with the reserve which appears to have accompanied it in the present case. There is no doubt that, under certain circumstances, criminal liability may attach to the circulation of false news, but whether such proceedings can properly be instituted in any particular case must depend upon the full knowledge of all the circumstances.

Income Tax.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when he proposes to appoint the Committee to examine into the administration of the Income Tax.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham): It is impossible at the present time to name a date.

Bury Magistracy.

MR. TOULMIN (Lancashire, Bury): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he is aware that there was already a preponderance of one political party on the Bury Borough Bench of magistrates, and that the appointments just announced have increased the disproportion of parties; and, if so, will he take steps, by a further appointment of magistrates, to remedy this inequality.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Sir WILLIAM WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton): I was not aware that there was a preponderance of one political party on the Bury Bench when I recently added a few gentlemen to that Bench. I certainly did not inquire into the political views of the borough justices. It is my desire to appoint gentlemen who are well qualified, and I must exercise my own discretion and judgment in the appointments I make. I see no reason to reopen the Commissions at present.

Bishops Froome Charity.

MR. EDWARDS (Radnor): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Tunbridge, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether the attention of the Charity Commissioners has been drawn to the fact that in the case of a charity at Bishops Froome the trustees have for several years, and in spite of applications, refused to render an annual account to the Parish Council; and, if so, whether the Charity Commissioners will take steps to compel the trustees to comply with the law in this respect.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): The Commissioners were informed on 18th June, 1902, by a letter forwarded to them from the Local Government Board, and written by the chairman of the Parish Council, that up to that time the accounts had been regularly forwarded at the proper time, but that those for the year 1901-2 were not forthcoming. The attention of the trustees was directed to their duties accordingly. On February 17th last, a renewed complaint was received, and on April 9th, the day when the accounts for 1902-3 ought to have been but were not rendered to the Commissioners, the trustees were required to render them accordingly within one calendar month. If the accounts are not so furnished, steps will be taken to compel their delivery. It is the chairman of the Parish Meeting, not the chairman of the Parish Council, who is entitled to receive accounts.

Marlborough Street Training College, Dublin.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what steps, if any, have been taken to provide suitable dwelling-house accommodation for the students attending Marlborough Street Training College, Dublin, and if it is intended to place the Government College on an equality in this respect with the denominational training colleges in Dublin and other parts of Ireland.

In putting the Question the hon. Member congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his recovery from illness.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The Government has had under consideration an application from the Commissioners for a grant of £50,000, or an annuity of £2,500 for thirty-five years, for the provision of suitable accommodation for the students of this college. It has not been found practicable to place so considerable a charge upon the Estimates. The proposal, however, will be further considered in relation to other demands in respect to education in Ireland.

Irish Land Bill—Town Parks.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can see his way to include town parks which are held as yearly tenancies in the coming Irish Land Bill, so that where landlord and tenant agree they may enter into terms of sale and purchase.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The existing law applies to a town park let and used as an agricultural or pastoral holding, or as partly agricultural and partly pastoral. If not so let, it is excluded from the Land Law Acts. No alteration of the existing law is therefore called for.

Irish Land Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland upon what principle will the first selection be made of Irish tenants to participate in the reductions of payment proposed by the Land Bill.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Land Bill deals chiefly with the purchase of estates. The question of selection does not arise. Bargains, if within the scope of the measure, will be sanctioned in accordance with priority of completion.

Wicklow Valuation.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the valuation of the licensed premises of Mrs. Catherine Lowe, of Kiltigan, County Wicklow, has been raised from £8 to £15, thereby increasing the licence duty from £4 10s. to £8 a year.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The valuation of these premises was revised in accordance with the principles laid down in the Valuation Acts and was not appealed against.

Irish Poor Law Medical Officers.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the desirability of including within the scope of the references to the Royal Commission about to be appointed to inquire into the amalgamation of unions in Ireland the question of the position of Poor Law medical officers.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This matter was dealt with in my reply to the similar Question of 30th March by the hon. Member for North Monaghan.†

Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution unanimously adopted by the Sligo Rural District Council at their meeting of the 4th ultimo, wherein they protest against the value placed by the Local Government arbitrator on land sought to be acquired for the purposes of the Labourers Acts; and, if so, what steps, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received. The arbitrator's award does not compare unfavourably with the amounts awarded by other arbitrators in similar circumstances elsewhere. The Local Government Board has every confidence in the fairness of the award in the present case, and it is not proposed to take further action in the matter.

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxx., 558.

Royal Irish Constabulary — Destruction of Papers.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why papers in connection with the Royal Irish Constabulary have been destroyed.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Inspector-General, on his inspection of police barracks throughout the country last summer, found large accumulations of useless and obsolete books and Returns, causing much inconvenience and, in some instances, being injurious to health. So far back as 31st October he ordered these to be arranged and examined by local officers, and finally be fixed a period for the destruction of each class of book and Return. Nothing which could be of any possible value as a public record has been destroyed or marked out for destruction under this order.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked whether these papers were not periodically destroyed, so that there was nothing new in this.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, as a matter of routine they are periodically destroyed, generally on the initiative of the officers in the place. In this case a thorough overhauling was undertaken.

Cunard Agreement.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is in a position to state at what date Parliamentary sanction will be asked to the Cunard Agreement.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is not possible yet to name a date.

Housing Accommodation at Westminster.

MR. BROADHURST: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the difficulty of obtaining suitable house accommodation at reasonable rents in the vicinity of the Houses of Parliament, the Government will take steps to provide such accommodation for Members who may desire such facilities.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware that the difficulty to which the hon. Gentleman refers does exist, indeed, I believe that the great growth of public offices in the immediate neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament has created a difficulty in regard to business offices as well. But I think the hon. Gentleman will see that, although a difficulty undoubtedly exists, it would not be possible for the Government to attempt to remedy it; the only remedy I can imagine is that of improved transit from this House at convenient hours, or more inconvenient hours, as the case may be, to places where hon. Gentlemen reside. Of course, an immense improvement has been introduced in our practice by the Twelve O'clock Rule, which enables hon. Gentlemen who live at distances to make their arrangements less inconvenient than they used to be in former times.

The Law Officers and Mr. Whitaker Wright.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when it is proposed to put down the Vote for the Salaries of the Law Officers of the Crown, so as to afford an opportunity of discussing their conduct in regard to the prosecution of Mr. Whitaker Wright.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The manner in which the Attorney-General exercises his responsibilities ought not, I think, to come under the consideration of the House while the prosecution is pending. The hon. Gentleman does not appear to have quite understood the situation. It has nothing whatever to do with the Solicitor-General, or anybody but the Attorney-General, acting in a quasi-judicial capacity.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked when the Port of London Bill was to be taken, and if it was to be the first Order of the Day, seeing that a considerable number of Members desired to take part in the debate.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) asked as to the Irish Development Grant Bill.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): And what Supply will be taken on Thursday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will endeavour to give adequate notice of the Second Reading of the London Port and Docks Bill; but I hope the House will not require very long notice, because that would make it very difficult to arrange matters. With regard to the Irish Development Grant Bill, I understand it is possible that the House may desire to conclude the discussion on the Irish Land Bill to-morrow evening at half-past seven. In that event I will put down the Development Grant Bill for the Evening Sitting. With regard to the Supply for next Thursday, I think the Revenue Votes ought to be continued or one of the Navy Votes taken. No demand has been made that a Navy Vote shall be taken, so I will continue the discussion on the Revenue Vote—that is, the Post Office Vote. The Budget Resolutions will, I hope, be taken next week. I propose to take the Transvaal Loan on Wednesday afternoon.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he cannot give a little more time to the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill in order that the representatives of the British taxpayer may have an opportunity of saying a word or two on the subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not understand my hon. friend. What I said was that if the House desired to conclude the discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill by half-past seven to-morrow, I would make such and such arrangements. That is all. I do not wish to limit the discussion.

NEW BILLS.

PUBLIC OFFICES (DUBLIN) BILL.

"For the acquisition of certain land in Dublin as a site for a proposed Royal College of Science and other offices and buildings for the public service, and for purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Arthur Elliot; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 175.]

AGED PENSIONERS (No. 3) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Goulding; supported by Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Remnant, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bull, Mr. Hay, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Bousfield, and Mr. J. W. Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 176.]

IRISH LAND BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I rise for the purpose of supporting the Second Reading of this Bill. I hope I shall not be considered wanting in proper courtesy to the two gentlemen who have given notice of opposition to the Bill if I do not treat their notices as very serious. One stands in the name of the hon. Member for South Molton, who gives certain reasons for his opposition which are not given by the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent. So far as that Motion is a protest against the policy of land purchase in Ireland, I respectfully say that it is at this time of day an absurdity. For good or for evil that policy has been adopted by both Parties of the House. The Liberal Party, with which the hon. Gentleman is associated, by the action of its responsible leaders and their votes in the Division Lobby have made themselves responsible for a policy of land purchase. So, too, has the Unionist Party. Under the operation of that policy close upon 100,000 farmers have been converted into owners, and the State has advanced the sum of £22,000,000 for the purpose, not a single sixpence of which has been lost. Under these circumstances it does seem to me almost puerile to suggest a reversal of that policy at this time of day. The Motion also alludes to what the hon. Member calls large gifts of public money. But the hon. Member, of course, is aware—as he is a well-informed man—that the money proposed to be given is Irish money. The Chief Secretary, in introducing the Measure, candidly and honestly told the House that this sum of £12,000,000 would be more than recouped by economies which could easily be effected, and had, in fact, been already partially effected in the cost of the administration of Ireland; and I respectfully submit to the hon. Member that when he finds Irish representation on both sides of the House absolutely united as to the particular allocation of purely Irish money, he might let his conscience be at rest, and console himself with the reflection that, after all, this is none of his business. Everybody who seriously regards his present situation knows perfectly well that an opportunity has unexpectedly arisen—an unparalleled opportunity—of making an attempt to lay the foundation of social peace in Ireland, and I do not envy the responsibility of hon. Members on either side of the House whose sole contribution to the situation is to propose a Motion, which, if carried, will drive the Irish people back into a perfect hell of conflict, passions, and disappointed hopes, and will destroy the best chance English statesmanship has had for the last hundred years of converting Ireland into a peaceful and prosperous country. It was my duty on the night when the Bill was introduced to speak immediately after the Chief Secretary, and to state there and then the impression the measure made on my mind; it was indeed a difficult task, and I necessarily spoke with the greatest possible reserve and caution. But, speaking now after full consideration of the measure, and after it has been subjected to most searching criticism in Ireland, I may be allowed to congratulate myself on the fact that I have nothing to change and very little to add to what I then said. The general impression, which was created the night the Bill was introduced—the general impression then gathered of the object, the purpose, and the principle of the Bill—was perfectly accurate, and the blots in the Bill which I then and there, in the name of my colleagues, pointed out and condemned, were the very points which have been universally condemned by public opinion in Ireland during these anxious weeks of the close examination of this Bill. I may say that of the real vital defects in this Bill there was scarcely one which was not instantly detected by my hon. friends who sit around me on these Benches, and at once denounced by me in their name. I and my friends and public opinion in Ireland recognise that in purpose and principle this is a great measure—that it is the greatest measure of land purchase reform ever seriously offered to the Irish people, and that it is intended to contain, and may quite easily be made to contain, all the elements of a settlement of the Irish agrarian difficulty, and the ending of the Irish land war, the permanent unity of all classes in Ireland and the laying broad and sure of the foundations of social peace. This impression of the general purpose and principle of the Bill and its possibilities has been intensified by the examination of the measure which has taken place in Ireland. So also has been intensified our conviction that there are defects in the measure of so grave a character that they are calculated, if left without remedy, largely to destroy and defeat the entire purpose and object of the Bill. The presence of those defects in the Bill is a repetition of the old story of the British belief in their superior wisdom, knowledge and experience of the wants of Ireland. In the Land Conference landlord and tenant came together and put forward their mature judgment as to what was necessary for the settlement of this question. But unfortunately, as usual, those who are responsible for this measure thought they knew what was wanted in Ireland better than Irishmen themselves, and the terms of the Land Conference Report have been seriously departed from, and the Bill offered not what the united wisdom of landlord and tenant asked for, but something different.

The Nationalist Convention held the other day in Dublin passed as its first Resolution a declaration from which I wish to read the following words—

> "That we congratulate the Irish race on the introduction by a British Ministry of a measure which for the first time in the history of land legislation in the Imperial Parliament, with the common assent of all parties in Ireland, accepts the principle that dual ownership in Ireland must end, and that, after centuries of struggle, the land of Ireland should be restored to the people of Ireland; that the acceptance of this principle promises the removal of the uncertainty, turmoil, and antagonism which have so long rendered peace or contentment

impossible in Ireland; that we feel it our duty at the same time to declare that the measure requires serious amendment in various points of vital importance; and in the earnest desire to make it acceptable to all classes in Ireland, and to be put into a position to present it to our people as a final settlement of the land struggle, we request the United Irish Party to press with all their power for the amendments which this Convention may propose on these points; and that in the confident expectation that the Bill will be largely and favourably amended in Committee, this Convention entrusts to the Irish Parliamentary Party the power and responsibility of deciding the attitude to be adopted towards the measure in the subsequent stages."

I have read that portion of the Resolution in order to show the House of Commons the spirit in which the Nationalist representatives approached the subject of Amendments to this Bill. Our object and the object of the Government is precisely the same. Both want a settlement of this question. Both want peace between classes in Ireland. Both want a financial arrangement which will be sound and safe alike to the State and to the tenant. Both want the landlords, after they have ceased to be landlords, to have the opportunity, if they desire, to live in their own country and take a share in the management of Irish affairs. We want the whole race to set to work in an earnest effort to repair the ravages of the past. Therefore, our object and the object of the Government are precisely the same, and let me say that we will propose no Amendment in Committee on this Bill hostile to the general purpose and spirit of the measure. We will propose no Amendment that in our judgment is not absolutely necessary in order to carry out the avowed intention and purpose of the Bill, none which, in our opinion, are not really as much in the interest of the landlord as in the interest of the tenants. For my part, I may be allowed to express my earnest hope, and indeed my belief, that there will be found scarcely one of our Amendments which will not receive in the House the support of the representatives of the Irish landlords. I think I know the proper limits of a discussion on the Second Reading of a Bill, and I have therefore no intention whatever of going *seriatim* through the Amendments which we intend to propose, and which we believe to be necessary in order to make the measure a final settlement. But there are certain defects in this Bill of so far-reaching and fatal a character that I must be allowed shortly to deal with them. First there is the question of the price which the tenant is to pay and the amount the landlord is to receive. Then there is the exclusion from the operation of the Bill of certain classes of tenants, questions of the interference of this Bill with existing rights of tenants, questions of administration and the important question of the congested districts.

I put the question of price in the forefront, because it must be manifest to everyone that it is absolutely vital to the success of the Bill, to the welfare of the individual purchaser and the future welfare of the State. The Bill provides a minimum price which every tenant must pay unless he is to be excluded from all the benefits of the Act. We protest against the fixing of a minimum price, holding it to be altogether out of place in a voluntary Bill. We claim that perfect freedom of bargaining must be left under the Bill to the landlords and tenants of Ireland. Clause 1 provides that the purchasing tenant must pay as his purchase instalment instead of rent, 70 per cent. in one class of sale, and at least 60 per cent. in another class of judicial rents. The largest reduction a tenant can obtain under the purchase clause is 30 per cent. in the case of one class of tenants, and 40 per cent. in another. But under the existing purchase system we know that, whatever the average price may have been, there have been cases of reduction as far as 40, 45, and 50 per cent. It may be said that these are extreme cases, in the sense that they are cases of poor holdings on bad land; but no one knows better than the Chief Secretary that such cases are by no means confined to congested districts. There is scarcely an estate in the whole of Ireland, even in Ulster and the richest parts, where you will not find a certain number of these poor holdings. But the Bill only deals with them where they are in great numbers on an estate. The right hon. Gentleman has recognised that it would be ridiculous where a large portion of an estate is made up of such holdings to put the limitations of the Bill as to price in operation, and these limitations are entirely removed in the congested districts, defined as estates, where one-half of the holdings do not exceed ten acres in area and £5 in rateable value, or are of mountain or bog land. But where the holdings of this character are only a third of the estate the limitations will be imposed, with the effect either that the poor holders will be forced to buy at a price which has been proved to be extravagant, or else the Bill will fail by its exclusion of the very class of tenant whose condition constitutes the evils and the dangers of the Irish land system. If this provision remains in the Bill it will, in my opinion, seriously threaten either the security of the State, by forcing these unfortunate tenants to buy at an extravagant price, or else it will threaten the success of the measure by excluding these men from its operation. The Bill abolishes altogether the decadal system of reduction, the system established in 1896, whereby tenants were enabled to get further reductions every ten years after the first thirty. But the retention of this decadal system is that advocated by all parties in Ireland, and I hope that under these circumstances it will be possible to recast the Bill so as to give effect to this general opinion. It might be done by reducing interest from $2\frac{3}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The right hon. Gentleman dissents from that, but it is worth his while to consider the matter. A resolution by Lord Dunraven's Committee suggested that economies in Irish administration should be ear-marked, and, instead of going to the reduction of charge for the bonus, should be used to set up the decadal reduction system. This is not the time to press that matter in further detail, but I do ask the right hon. Gentleman to take note of the fact that all parties—every section of the landlords and all the representatives of the tenants—desire this decadal reduction system to be maintained. I hope he will be able to see some way out of this difficulty.

While I am on the question of finance, let me point out that the Bill provides that the bonus is to be distributed in inverse ratio to the amount of the purchase money. The effect of this will be to keep large estates out of the market, because in such cases, as far as the bonus is concerned, there will cease to be absolutely any inducement to sell at all. Public opinion in Ireland has taken a very decided course on this matter. The National Convention, the Landlords' Convention, and Lord Dunraven's Committee are absolutely at one in urging the desirability of having a uniform bonus, of making that bonus 15 per cent. all round on the purchase money from the beginning, provided that no landlord shall get the advantage of a bonus who does not initiate proceedings for the sale of his estate within five years. I ask the House to note the significance of the fact that, step by step, I am able to quote the recommendations of the landlords, as well as of the tenants, for my suggested alterations in the Bill I hold a very strong opinion as to the necessity for a time limit if this Bill is to work at such a rate as will afford any prospect of the settlement of this question in our lifetime.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): Will the hon. and learned Member state where the landlords of Ireland agreed to a time limit ?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Yes, I have got it here. It is paragraph No. 3 where they state—

> "We consider that the grant-in-aid should be distributed at a uniform rate of not less than 15 per cent. and by transactions initiated by the landlord within a period of five years after the passing of this Act."

I can assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that I am too old a tactician to attempt to secure a point by making a false statement. Upon all these points I am quoting, not only the opinion of the tenants, but also of the landlords. Allow me now to address a few words on the subject of the evicted tenants. I am most anxious not to rake up any subject of past conflict, controversy, or bitterness, but I ask the House of Commons, composed as it is in the main, I am certain, of fair-minded men, can they expect that we upon these Benches, who have been connected with this Irish land struggle for the last twenty years and have been connected with these evicted tenants, can possibly be expected to accept as a final settlement of the Irish Land Question any scheme which excludes from its operation these men, who have risked and lost everything in the land struggle. Does any sane man inside this House dream that this measure can succeed in its great object of bringing permanent peace to Ireland if it leaves here and there over the country centres of grievance, trouble and disaffection, in the persons of disaffected tenants excluded from the Bill? No sane man can take such a view. Speaking through the mouth of those who sat on the Land Conference and upon Lord Dunraven's Committee, which speaks in the name of a large majority of the landlords, and proved by a very large vote taken some months ago that they are not hostile upon this question. They recognise that you cannot expect to have social peace if these men here and there are discontented, and I cannot conceive for a moment that the Government hold any such insane idea. In answer to an inquiry, it was with great relief to my mind that Sir Antony Macdonnel wrote to me to the effect that it was not the intention of the Government to exclude any evicted tenants from the benefits of this Bill. There are limitations in Clause 2 which, if left in the Bill, must exclude a large proportion indeed of evicted tenants. I take it when we come to the Committee stage there will be no objections to absolutely removing these limits and putting the evicted tenants exactly upon the same footing as other persons, so far as limitation of amount is concerned.

I have referred to the evicted tenants for the purpose of emphasising another point, because I take it for granted that the limitations must go. The Bill provides nothing at all in the shape of powers to the Estates Commissioners or anybody else to facilitate friendly arrangements to enable old tenants to get back on to the farms which are now in the possession of new tenants; but, vastly important as this is, it is a small and circumscribed question. There are not many such cases, and I am not asking the right hon. Gentleman to put compulsion into his Bill. I am not asking that, although I think under the circumstances it would be a wise thing to do. What I am asking is to give to the Estates Commissioners sufficient powers and sufficient money to enable them to facilitate friendly arrangements whereby many of these tenants might get back their old homes. Their number is very small. I know it is very small, although I would not like to commit myself to the exact numbers. We know also from our experience that many of these tenants are not really agriculturists at all, for they are kept there at great expense by the landlord, simply as part of the land war, and we know that the Estates Commissioners, if they were practical and sensible men, if they had the powers and a small sum of money, would be able to effect friendly relations in a great majority of these cases. A suggestion was made, which struck me as a very useful one, by the *Freeman's Journal.* That journal suggested that the reserve fund should be used partly for this purpose. I may explain to the House that the reserve fund is part of the guarantee fund under the Land Act of 1891, that it was abolished by the Land Act of 1896, and at the time it was abolished it amounted, I think, to about £200,000; and now it amounts probably to not far short of £250,000. What is done with that sum under this Bill? It is given to the Land Commissioners for a purpose analogous to the one I am dealing with. It is given to the Land Commissioners for improvement works where they purchase an estate, and where they enlarge the buildings and so forth, before giving it back to the tenants. I think the suggestion is an admirable one that these Commissioners should have the power of using this £250,000, not only to improve farms before reselling, but also for the purpose of endeavouring to bring about these friendly settlements. The amount required would be very little. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose introduced an Evicted Tenants Bill he proposed £100,000, and he proposed to take it from the Church Fund. As time has gone on the area affected by this question has undoubtedly diminished, and if £100,000 was all that was necessary then a considerably less sum would be all that would be necessary now. I think it only a fair thing to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give this power to the Commissioners, and use this fund for this purpose, as well as that of the improvement and enlargement of buildings.

This is called a voluntary Bill, and yet in one portion of it there is contained compulsion of the most serious and objectionable character upon certain classes of tenants. It is provided that where an estate is sold to the Estates Commissioners, and where three-fourths of the tenants agree to buy their holdings back from the Commissioners, that then the remaining one-fourth shall be compelled to buy at a price that, presumably, they think unfair, or else in the alternative they lose once and for ever all their rights to have fair rents fixed under the Act of 1881; but it does not stop there, for it goes on to say that in every case that the Lord Lieutenant approved of, the same thing can take place where a bare majority are in favour of the sale. That has only, I think, to be stated to show what a monstrously unjust proposal it is. The landlord makes a bargain with the Estates Commissioners and sells his estate to them, and out of 100 tenants perhaps fifty-one are willing to buy their holdings at the price named by the Commission; but forty-nine think it exorbitant, and they would be beggared if they paid it. The result will be that the fifty-one men will buy and the forty-nine are deprived of the right of having their rents fixed under the Act. Here again the Irish landlords take the same view that we do. I have the resolution here, if I am challenged, where they declare that Clause 17, to which I am alluding, imposes unjust and oppressive restrictions upon the tenants and constitutes in point of fact compulsion. I think perhaps I ought to quote the words, for they are very short—

> "While recognising that sales and purchase should not be impeded by the unreasonable action of small minorities, we recommend that Clause 17 of the Bill involves compulsion upon tenants to an unwarrantable extent."

I cannot conceive that the right hon. Gentleman will hesitate for a moment to remove this blot from the Bill. When I complained of this on the first night when this Bill was introduced, the Chief Secretary answered, by means of an interruption by saying, that there was a precedent in the 40th Section of the Act of 1896; but really that is not so, because the 40th Section of that Act is entirely different. What it provides is that where three-fourths of the tenants agree to buy, the remainder, if they refuse the terms, shall be treated as if they had bought, and called upon to pay their instalments on the same basis as if they had bought; but there is no interference at all, except in that way, with their right to get a fair rent fixed under the Act of 1881. What is proposed here? The compulsion is not to compel men to buy if they refuse, the penalty is not that they should pay regular instalments on the basis of purchase, but that they shall remain as tenants, but as tenants deprived of their right under the Act of 1881 to have a fair rent fixed. Everyone must admit that it would be a monstrous thing if a little handful of tenants were able to block the purchase or sale of an estate. We all recognise that some provision of that kind ought to be in the Bill, but we protest most vehemently against giving the power to a bare majority to compel the rest. We protest against even a majority of three-fourths, and we say, whatever the proportion arrived at may be, that penalty ought to be similar to the penalty under the 4th Section of the Act of 1891 and not as provided in this Bill.

Now I want to say a word or two on the question of administration. There never was a measure proposed which so absolutely depends upon administration as this Bill. On the first night I innocently fell into a very great mistake on this matter. Understanding from the right hon. Gentleman that the administration of this Bill was to be in the hands of a non-judicial tribunal, where the members would be all on an equality, where their salaries would be on the Estimates, so that we could discuss them and criticise them on the floor of the House, I rose and congratulated him heartily on the administration which he proposed in the Bill. I will not say that I was deceived, but I was under an entire misapprehension. It is perfectly true that, so far as two of these gentlemen are concerned they are on an equality, and their salaries are to be on the Estimates and we can discuss them. But the third member of the Commission is not to be on an equality with the other two, and whether he is called President or Chairman is a very small matter. He is, as the Bill stands, the superior, the boss of the tribunal. The two gentlemen are to have salaries of £2,000 a year, I think it is, and their salaries are to be on the Estimates and we can all discuss them. But the third gentleman is to have a salary of £3,000 a year, and his salary is to be on the Consolidated Fund, like that of a judge. And who, forsooth, is this gentleman? The one man in all Ireland, I believe, whom the Government could have found, against whom both landlord and tenant object. We have had considerable experience of Mr. Wrench, both on the Land Commission and the Congested Districts Board, and we object to his nomination on its merits, even if he were on an equality with the other two. But when he is put in a superior position—in an unassailable position—where, if we want to attack him, all that we can do is to attack Mr. Bailey, or Mr. Finucane on the floor of the House, his position becomes absolutely intolerable, and I feel sure that we will be able to make a united effort in Committee on this point which will show the right hon. Gentleman the absurdity of the position he has put in the Bill. Mr. Wrench is still to be a member of the Congested Districts Board, another most objectionable thing. Mr. Wrench, in the belief of many of us, has been the evil spirit of the Congested Districts Board. In the opinion of many of us Mr. Wrench has been responsible for the dilatoriness, and lack of initiative and courage of that Board, but now he has to be in a dual capacity. He is to be the sacrosanct member of a non-judicial tribunal, whose salary is to be on the Consolidated Fund like that of a judge on the one side, and he is to remain a member of the Congested Districts Board at the same time. The positions are inconsistent. If the right hon. Gentleman values his work on the Congested Districts Board so much, in God's name let him keep him there. But if he is to be put into the position of a Land Commissioner he certainly must be taken off the Congested Districts Board.

In passing from administration, let me in a word call attention to what I cannot help characterising as an exceedingly petty, and an exceedingly mean, action on the part of those responsible for this Bill. There are at this moment besides Judge Meredith, as Land Commissioners, Mr. Wrench, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Murrough O'Brien. Will it be believed by this House that one of these gentlemen is to be picked out to be penalised, so to speak, by this Bill? Mr. Lynch is under the ordinary law certain of pension rights. Mr. Wrench gets his pension rights under the Bill, Mr. Fitzgerald gets his pension rights under the Bill, but Mr. Murrough O'Brien, neither under the existing law nor this Bill, is entitled to any pension whatever. Now who is Mr. Murrough O'Brien? He has been a public servant for thirty-three years, and a Land Commissioner for ten years, and I am speaking what everybody connected with Ireland knows is absolutely true, when I say that he is the one member of the Land Commission who, in the past, has had the confidence and good-will of the tenants. It is a most audacious thing. I do not know who drafted the clause. It could not have been the right hon. Gentleman himself; he would not have brought petty malice of this kind into the Bill, but somebody in Ireland is responsible for this. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: The Attorney-General.] It is a monstrous thing that a clause should be drawn in this way: that ample pensions are provided for three of the Commissioners, and one is deprived of any pension at all, and he the only one who has the confidence and good-will of the Irish tenants. Now let me pass from that matter, simply saying that I feel certain the House of Commons is too fair-minded an assembly to tolerate the exclusion of Mr. Murrough O'Brien when we come to deal with this matter in Committee.

Let me come now to deal with the question which is the most important and far-reaching of all. I mean the question of the congested districts. There was no portion of this Bill that to me was such a crushing disappointment as the portion dealing with the congested districts. I think now that the House pretty well understands what these congested districts are. Certainly the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary understand the question. They know as well as any man living that to talk about a settlement of the Irish Land Question which does not settle the Connaught question is a rank absurdity. Let me say in two sentences what our view is about the congested districts. I do not believe that you will do any good to the congested districts until you enlarge the constitution of the Congested Districts Board, until you enlarge the powers of the Board, until you give them compulsory power in some cases, and until you schedule the whole of Connaught. One of the resolutions passed by the Nationalist Convention was to the effect that the County Councils of the Congested Districts ought to be given some representation on the Congested Districts Board. That is a suggestion. I do not pin myself to one suggestion, and to one only, but I do say that I am convinced that the constitution of this Board requires to be enlarged and strengthened, that the whole procedure of the Board requires to be accelerated, and animated with a new spirit and new life, and that initiative must be instilled into that Board if it is to do any good. On the question of enlarged powers I think it will be worth my while once again to read what I have read more than once in past years—the unanimous Resolution of the Congested Districts Board themselves, passed in the year 1895, on this question of compulsion. The last time I quoted this I quoted the then Chief Secretary, who is now the President of the Board of Trade, and also the Prime Minister, as having been in favour of this Resolution because their names were signed to it. They interrupted me and said that they signed the Report, but that they did not intend the signature to carry the idea that they were in favour of this Resolution. It will be understood that I read these two names subject to that explanation. The Resolution was as follows—

> "That the Congested Districts Board is in possession of information through their inspectors that there are large tracts of land that could be used to enlarge the holdings of small occupiers and promote schemes of migration in congested districts. The Board are, however, of opinion that it will be impossible for them to give effect to this important department of their work unless more funds are placed at their disposal, and compulsory powers given to them to acquire such lands at their just value."

The signatures appended to that declaration are, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Sir David Harrel, Mr. Charles Kennedy, the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Mr. Frederick W. Price, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. James H. Tuke, Mr. Frederick Wrench, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Rev. W. S. Green, and the Rev. Denis O'Hara. I have never heard a satisfactory answer given to this claim. It is quite a different claim from the claim for the settlement of the Land question all through Ireland by compulsion. This is strictly confined to a small area, and the compulsion is only to be for the purpose of taking possession of lands that are not in possession of people living on, and working on, them, but simply for the purpose of taking possession of great tracts of grazing land where no human beings live at all, and on the very borders of which humanity is seething in misery and wretchedness on the bog and on the mountain. Let me enforce what I have said by a more recent declaration than the one from the Congested Districts Board. Here are two resolutions adopted by a meeting of the Catholic Bishops of the Province of Connaught. Of course everyone who is acquainted with Ireland knows that you could not get information on a question of this kind from that part of Ireland more valuable than information coming from those Prelates. They live there amongst the people and know the facts. Scarcely any of them are political partisans of ours. They do not look at things through political spectacles, but simply look at this question and speak upon it from their own experience of their daily life among the people. Here is the Resolution passed on the 9th of April—

> "That, whilst recognising the immense value of the Land Bill now before Parliament, and earnestly hoping that, in an amended form, it will become law, we desire to record our conviction that the proposals outlined in the Bill for dealing with the great question of congestion, and the cultivation of vast tracts of prairie land in the West of Ireland, are quite inadequate; larger and more extensive powers should be conferred on the Congested Districts Board throughout the entire Province, similar to the powers granted to the Crofters' Commission for Scotland."

That is a modified kind of compulsion.

> "And, above all, no landlord should be enabled, with the public money, practically to purchase from himself any land outside his residential demesne, nor should any persons be allowed to purchase non-residential holdings except on condition of making them residential, and the money granted for this purpose should not, in any case, exceed £1,000. We feel it our duty to declare that if the Government will not take these, or similar

measures to deal with this great question in a thorough-going way, the Land Question will not be settled in the West, nor the tide of emigration checked; nor can peace and contentment be restored until the grazing lands, taken from the people in that part, be given back to the men who are able and willing to work them for the maintenance of themselves and their families."

That resolution is signed by John Healy, Archbishop of Tuam (in the Chair); Francis Joseph MacCormack, Bishop of Galway; John Lyster, Bishop of Achonry; John Conmy, Bishop of Killala; and John Clancy, Bishop of Elphin. I do not think it is possible for me to exaggerate the importance to a wise Minister who has charge of an Irish Bill of paying attention to a declaration of that kind. Again, we are on the same ground as the landlords in our demands. Here, again, I can quote the Irish landlords, because in the Land Conference Report, agreed to by the representatives of the landlords as well as by us, there is a paragraph referring to the congested districts, and outlining almost precisely, what is claimed here now on our behalf at this moment. I must guard myself from wearying the House, and pass from the Congested Districts Board with the simple declaration that its constitution ought to be enlarged and strengthened, its powers increased, and the whole of Connaught ought to be scheduled within its jurisdiction.

In regard to the Irish labourers in connection with this Bill, I really do not know what to say. Honestly, I cannot fathom the reason which induced the right hon. Gentleman to put his name to these clauses in the Bill. If he had said to us that this was a great measure, and that he could not deal with two or three different subjects at the same time, and that he would leave over the labourers question to be dealt with in a separate Bill, we could have understood the position. But what he has done is to put into this Bill clauses dealing with the Labourers Acts which are absolutely worthless and futile. I say that if the labourers were to be asked to take these clauses as they stand, or nothing at all, they would say, "Strike them out." These clauses are a mockery of the claims of the labourers; they are almost adding insult to injury; and I am convinced that, whoever put them into this Bill, they do not represent the full mind and the intention of the right hon. Gentleman on the labourers question; and I cannot fathom why they were placed in the Bill, unless he is prepared to accept a series of new clauses, which we propose to submit, totally changing the character of these proposals, taking them right out of the Bill, because as they stand they are little better than a mockery. There are innumerable other questions on which I might speak at some length, some of them of vital importance. There is the question of the perpetual rent-charge against which the opinion of Ireland is practically unanimous. There is the question also of making quite sure the position of future tenants and of caretakers, although on that point I am satisfied from declarations which have been made, that the shortcomings of the Bill will be remedied, and that the right hon. Gentleman has no purpose of excluding them from the benefits of the Bill. There are innumerable other points of vital importance which must stand over until we come to consider them in Committee, for it is manifest that it is impossible for me to dwell upon them now at any length. The hon. Member for East Mayo, who, I am glad to say, is back amongst us in restored health, will speak on these questions if he gets the opportunity before the Debate closes to-night, and he, I feel sure, will repair the omissions I have made, and will probably speak more fully and with greater force upon some of the important questions I have dealt with. I must therefore leave the matter at the point to which I have come.

Let me in conclusion address a few words of advice, and a few words, if I may be allowed to do so, of serious warning to the Chief Secretary. Never before — let him never forget that— since the Act of Union has an English Minister in Ireland the chance that he now has of successfully dealing with this Irish agrarian difficulty. Ireland to-day is united in her demands in almost all essentials. As I have pointed out, landlords and tenants are in agreement. Both sides have made concessions for the sake of peace. The advisers and the leaders of the tenants have incurred great risks and exposed themselves to much misrepresentation; they have undertaken very grave and serious responsibility in their efforts to save their country from a continuation of the land war which for so long has desolated Ireland, and in behalf of peace. They have made many concessions, and I ought to be the first to admit with gratitude and with pride that the people have stood by them with magnificent loyalty. Well, we have come back here now from our country with the mandate of our people on this Bill, and fortified by a vote of complete and absolute confidence. We are asking nothing unreasonable. We are only asking for Amendments on those matters which I have indicated. It is more probable that we Irishmen, the persons concerned, the landlords and tenants combined, take a right view on these matters than you Englishmen. We ask you only to make concessions to the practically united demands of the Irish people of all classes, whose interest in this matter is the same as yours, and must be deeper and higher than yours in the settlement of this question and the pacification of Ireland. I would say to the right hon. the Chief Secretary—"If you listen to the voice of Ireland this matter will be settled, and unborn generations of Englishmen and Irishmen alike will through all time applaud your wisdom and your statesmanship. Do not, I entreat you, lose heart in your efforts. Other efforts of English statesmanship have failed again and again in the past just because they fell a little short of what was necessary to settle the problem. Let it be the glory of the Chief Secretary to be thorough. For the first time in the history of the connection between England and Ireland be thorough in your policy." I am bound at the same time to say that if the right hon. Gentleman rejects the advice which comes to him from the landlords and the tenants alike; if, like so many of his predecessors, he rejects and despises Irish public opinion, and refuses the reasonable Amendments which will come to him with the sanction of both parties to the contest, then I warn him that we shall be forced to wash our hands of all responsibility. Under such circumstances as that, the right hon. Gentleman may pass this measure unamended into law, but he will be the first to admit that a measure passed under such conditions will not only not close this question, but will only add one more to that long list of well-intentioned but futile efforts to settle the Irish problem by the force of English public opinion and English judgment. With all my heart I pray that that state of things may not arise. I think it would be, in truth, little short of a tragedy if now, under the blessed circumstances of this moment, the right hon. Gentleman were, either through failure to appreciate the various forces at his back and the enormous power he wields, with all classes united behind him, or through an unbending and unreasonable defiance of Irish public opinion—it would be little short of a tragedy if the Government were to throw away this golden opportunity which, once lost, in all human probability will not recur in the lifetime of this generation. If this happens the guilt will not rest on the Irish National representatives. We will go into Committee on this Bill in a friendly, practical, business-like, and reasonable spirit, and I beseech the right hon. Gentleman and the Government to meet the claims which we put forward in a spirit of reason and conciliation.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to move that "This Bill be read this day six months." After listening to the hon. Gentleman for an hour, finding fault with it and discovering so many blemishes in it, I did expect that he would move this Resolution himself. When the Bill was brought before the House for its First Reading, I called attention to the proposed free gift of £12,000,000, and complained of it from the point of view of the British taxpayer; and I wish to speak on behalf of the British taxpayer in dealing with the principles on which this Bill ought to be discussed on its Second Reading. I must say that so far as the free gift of £12,000,000 goes that is a mere bagatelle compared with the loan of £150,000,000, and it is on that loan of £150,000,000 that I wish to dwell now. The right hon. the Chief Secretary told us in bringing in the Bill that he is of Irish descent. He need not have done so; I think we should have discovered that from his statement that we had only two parties to deal with in this matter—the Irish tenants and the Irish landlords. It never seemed to occur to the right hon. Gentleman that he omitted to mention the most important party interested—the general taxpayer. More truly we were told that we ought to bear in mind the union of hearts. This union of hearts we all most earnestly desire, but who would have supposed for a moment that the hon. Member for Donegal and the Chief Secretary had the same end before them although they were travelling by slightly different roads, and that my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Armagh, instead of calling hon. Members opposite moonlighters, assassins, and murderers, now finds in the Irish Members his warmest, closest, and best friends. This is a blessed and very gratifying incident in a situation which is altogether embarrassing and bewildering.

We have heard this afternoon of the Convention at Dublin. I was not impressed by the proceedings of that Convention. I fully recognise that it was got up with a great deal of solemn theatrical display for the benefit of the very gullible English public. I have seen too much of National Conventions in Ireland, and the conclusions they have come to, to be very much impressed by this one. We are told this Bill is to work a revolution in Ireland—I believe that is admitted on all hands—if this Bill is passed. But I have always understood that it is extremely foolish to bring about a revolution in any country when that country is absolutely quiet and reasonable. Moreover, when a revolution is started it is not easy to stop it. Ireland is, at present, in a state of prosperity which has never been equalled in her history. Indeed, Ireland may be said to be booming. The price of agricultural produce is higher than it was, and the banking and railway statistics show that the prosperity of the country is greater now than at any other period of her history. I do not want to weary the House by quoting all the figures; but I should like to call attention to the returns of the Joint Stock Banks. In 1882 the profit and cash balances of these banks were £32,000,000; and in 1902 they amounted to £44,000,000. That is an increase in twenty years of £12,000,000. The importance of that increase is not to be measured by the figures themselves, as all the time the population of Ireland was steadily decreasing, and, consequently, each man, woman and child had an additional amount of wealth distributed between them. In the Post Office Savings Banks we find exactly the same thing. We find the deposits largely increasing; and again I must remind the House of the diminished population of the country. Further, the railway traffic has been steadily increasing for twenty years. Surely all this is evidence of prosperity which is not to be put on one side. We also know that Ireland is shortly to receive the honour of a Royal visit; and, further, that the great motor-car contest is to be held in Ireland, which means a great influx of capital into the country, an excellent thing for the benefit of Ireland. Then we have been told by the Chief Secretary that certain citizens are to take over a large part of the roads of Ireland, a function which is performed by the ratepayers on this side of the Channel. Last, but not least, we are told that an Institute of Industry is to be established, which, I venture to say, is a brighter augury for the future of Ireland and a better omen, than all the Land Bills which an enthusiastic but visionary Chief Secretary might introduce.

With regard to the £12,000,000 we have to find, we have been told that it is to be a golden bridge to get over the gap between the demands of the landlords and what the tenants are prepared to pay. How is that amount to be spent? As far as I can make out, it will go entirely into the pockets of the legal profession. With regard to the savings which the Chief Secretary hopes to effect, he has told us that he expects to make a large saving on the Land Commission; but it will be apparent that the Land Commission must go on for a considerable period yet; and I do not think that the Land Commission will allow itself to be disestablished all at once. Then the Chief Secretary also expects to effect a large saving on the police. But the police will be the very people who will be called upon to collect the instalments under the new Land Bill. So far from effecting any saving in regard to the police, the right hon.

Gentleman will want more police than ever before. The savings put forward by the right hon. Gentleman are entirely illusory. Then there is the equivalent grant of £185,000; and, as regards that, I merely wish to say that I do not understand why Ireland should have the grant, inasmuch as all the education in the country is paid for out of the Consolidated Fund. The Chief Secretary told us that the grant is to be used to make good the loss to be incurred in issuing land stock. Surely that is a brilliant investment for the British taxpayer. Now, I want to come to my main objections to this Bill. My first objection is that there is no originality in the proposals of the Chief Secretary; because this Bill is exactly the same Bill as was brought in by Mr. Gladstone in 1886, only that it is much worse. I opposed Mr. Gladstone's Bill in 1886, and I oppose this now. I suppose such consistency is exceedingly shocking; indeed, I gather from the English Press that it is very painful. The noble Lord the Member for Greenwich told us that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was an enlightened opportunist.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have never changed.

MR. COGHILL: It is difficult to understand the position of the First Lord of the Treasury, and I look forward with interest to see how he will defend his enlightened opportunism on this occasion. Mr. Gladstone, when he brought forward the Bill of 1886, was absolutely right, from his point of view, when he said that the land question and Home Rule must go together. I entirely agree with Mr. Gladstone. You cannot separate the two subjects. You cannot possibly bring n a Land Bill and then say you are not going to introduce a Home Rule Bill. Might I ask the First Lord of the Treasury pointedly whether the Government mean to bring in a Home Rule Bill or not? We have seen a great deal about it in the papers recently; a great many direct statements have been made that the Government have that intention. May I ask whether the Government intend to bring in a Home Rule Bill or—and that "or" is very important—a modified form of self-government. If I had been asked if the Government were going to bring in a Land Bill based on the lines of Mr. Gladstone's Bill I should have replied in this way: "You are at liberty to say that the story is a fantastic fabrication, which could never have occurred to anybody in the smallest degree acquainted with the opinions, to say nothing of the character, of any single one of His Majesty's present advisers." The Chief Secretary spoke of the policy of Pitt and Castlereagh; and I think a great many people felt some alarm as to how far the right hon. Gentleman was going in connection with these two statesmen. It reminds me of the celebrated letter written by Mr. Gladstone to one whose name was also George—it was not addressed to the Chief Secretary—in which he spoke of the baseness and blackguardism by which the Union was passed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): That George sat for your own constituency.

MR. COGHILL: As a matter of fact that is not the case. When we try to ascertain whether the Government have any intention of bringing in a Home Rule Bill or not, we have to look at the indications given by the Government. I may remind the House that, since the last election there has been a Gentleman in Dublin, who, in my opinion, is a Home Ruler. I mean Mr. Horace Plunkett. He has never been disavowed by his colleagues, and still remains a Member of the Government. Mr. Plunkett has not been supported whenever he stood as the Unionist candidate; he can hardly be reckoned as a Member of the Unionist Party any longer, though he is still a Member of the Government. I do not care whether the First Lord of the Treasury tells me whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Home Rule Bill or not. My point is this, that by this Bill the Government are giving Home Rule to Ireland. That is the point I wish to impress on the House. If this Bill is once passed it will be impossible for us to refuse Home Rule, or anything else the Irish people demand. This Bill is, from my point of view, giving Ireland Home Rule, not in a straightforward way, which would enable us to oppose it, but by a side wind. That is the chief ground of my opposition to the Bill.

Again, I fail altogether to find any security for the loan of £150,000,000 which we are asked to advance. I want to know where the security for the loan is. We are told there is the land; but who will guarantee the successors of the present leaders of the Irish Party. They may be quite willing to maintain the bargain they are making with the Government; but what about their successors? Remember the period for which this loan is to be guaranteed is no less a period than sixty-eight years—nearly three generations. How are you going to maintain the guarantee during that period? I do not think that the Irish tenant will have such an interest in his grandchildren that he will go very much out of his way to protect their interests when more immediate interests come ready to his hand. Suppose another no-rent agitation is started in Ireland—another plan of campaign. Are you to go to war with the whole of Ireland; are you to evict a whole country-side? It is impossible, and cannot be done. I need not refer to that because it was put in a more able way than I can ever put it by the Colonial Secretary. This is what the right hon. Gentleman said on this very point:—

> "Bear in mind this—you working men of England and Scotland will be the Irish landlords; you will have to evict the tenants; you will have to collect the arrears at the point of the bayonet; and I refuse to be a party to such a transaction."

These words are as true to-day as when they were spoken.

There is just one letter I should like to quote—

> "As long as the land exists it must have landlords, and it is only a matter of replacing one class of such by a much worse, or more ignorant, or more greedy one. Again, how is a general strike against Government rents or annuities, to be guarded against, as you cannot evict a whole country-side? When reference is sometimes made to the present annuities being well discharged, it is forgotten that these are all cases carefully selected, many would-be purchasers being rejected as bad security."

That is the opinion of an Irish landlord· [Cries of "Name."] I cannot give the name because I do not know it. Then we are told that besides the land there is another security, and this is the most wonderful security of which I have ever heard. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife said, "Besides the land there is a moral security." I wonder how much the right hon. Gentleman would lend of his own money on "moral security." I do not think very much. The right hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton are never tired of going about the country and denouncing the Government for their extravagance, and I think when an opportunity is given to them to take some steps in favour of economy they might give a vote against this enormous sum of £150,000,000, to say nothing of the £12,000,000, and that the speeches of both right hon. Gentlemen outside the House ought to bear some relation to the votes they are going to give in the House.

There is no finality with regard to this. If it was a really final Bill I daresay most of us, much as we dislike it, would feel compelled to vote for it, but I do not believe for a moment, nor, I believe, does anybody else, that this is a final Bill. But I need not labour that point, because it has been answered by a very able Member of the Government. Speaking at Oxford last Saturday night the Solicitor-General said—

> "He would give it the minimum of his support; he should do so because of his official position, and for the simple reason that he knew of no alternative; having said so much he passed away from the Irish Land Bill, and having so passed away from it, he looked forward to the next Bill."

The hon. Member for South Tyrone, speaking of the gift of £12,000,000, said very candidly that he thought £12,000,000 was inadequate. He wanted more, and thought the gift ought to be £16,000,000. Under those circumstances there is not much danger in forecasting that in the next Land Bill before this House we shall be asked to reduce the amount of the instalments, and for another loan of £12,000,000. But there is one vital objection to this Bill. We have not the money to carry it out. However benevolent we may feel, there is no money for a Land Purchase Bill. At the present time we are spending £34,000,000 on our Army, and £34,000,000 on our Navy. Where is the money to come from? The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not, if I may say so, deal with this matter in a fair and candid manner. In introducing the Budget he referred to the various demands that had been made upon the Exchequer, but he totally forgot to mention the demand which was going to be made by this Bill. That was not quite candid. Then I may point out that under this Bill we get nothing back whatever. We are told it is to be a final settlement between ourselves and gentlemen in Ireland. They do not abate one jot of their demands. They are willing to take this Bill now, but then they go on for Home Rule as merrily as ever. Where, then, does this conciliation, this settlement, come in? The hon. and learned Member for Waterford deprecated the subject of Home Rule being mixed up with land purchase. I quite see why. We, the simple English people, are to swallow the bait of land purchase, conciliation, and peace, and are not to see the Home Rule hook. On the 9th of April, speaking at Dublin, the hon. Member for Waterford said—

> "I thought it was best for us not to attempt to mislead or hoodwink English public opinion, and I declared emphatically, on the part of the Irish Members of the House of Commons and, as I believe, of the whole nation at home, that a satisfactory settlement of the land question would not mean a settlement of the national question. We believe that a settlement of the land question will remove the most formidable obstacle in the path to Home Rule. We believe a settlement of the land question will mean an enormous step along the road of Home Rule."

I am against Home Rule, but I agree with the hon. and learned Member. The hon. Member for Clare put the matter still clearer. He said—

> "Twenty-one years ago England denounced the Land League as existing for the purposes of plunder, but now the most powerful Tory Government of modern times had introduced a Bill, every line of which was composed on the platform and programme of the Land League, started in Mayo by Michael Davitt. But though the Government was doing what the Irish Party wanted on the land question, there could be no compromise on the question which stood first of all, the right of Ireland to govern herself."

How can we believe, in the face of such declarations, that this Bill is going to bring about any settlement in Ireland. So long as hon. Gentlemen take that view it is illusory to tell us there is going to be a final settlement. [An IRISH MEMBER: On the Land Question.] All I can say is that there is no peace, no conciliation, no final settlement, and that the British taxpayer receives back absolutely nothing for the £150,000,000 he is now called upon to find.

What I want to know is: Why has so much been done for Ireland and so little for England? It is due to the excessive representation which Ireland has in this House. No matter which side is in office, both make a bid for the Irish vote. I know no reason why so much should be done for Ireland. I think the other parts of the United Kingdom have an equal claim, and if we are to have a land nationalisation system let us have it all round, in England, Scotland, and Wales, as well as in Ireland. Looking round this afternoon, I naturally asked myself who would be on my side against the Second Reading of this Bill. First of all I should hope to have the support of the Labour Members. Then we have those who are known I think, as the Fourth Party, who follow the lead of the hon. Member for Whitby. [Cries of "No, no!" and "Greenwich."] Well, whoever they follow, they waxed very eloquent lately on the subject of economy in the Army, and so far as that economy is concerned it is only a question of thousands, while it is in this case a question of millions. I should hope they would be as earnest in this case as they were in favour of economy in the Army. I hope also for the support of all those who were returned to this House in 1886, because this is the same Bill as that which they denounced then. Then I appeal to all those who call themselves Liberal Imperialists—those gentlemen who have wiped Home Rule from their slates. They need not be afraid of giving a straightforward answer to this question, though I am afraid they will have to re-write Home Rule on their slate, even if they have to go to Lord Penrhyn to borrow a slate for the purpose. I do not wish to detain the House too long. There are only one or two questions I wish to ask in conclusion. Right hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House are never tired of pointing the finger of scorn at the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs, but I want to know if, after all these seventeen years of contest and vexation, we are to undergo the shame of feeling that after all the right hon. Member for Montrose

Burghs is right. All I can say is, I hope not. I hope there will be no departure from the great principles which have animated the Unionist Party in the past. I hope we shall show ourselves as steadfast on this question as we were in 1886, and that there will be no hauling down of our colours.

The last question I wish to ask is: If the Bill goes through, will the country be consulted about it? That was the precedent set in 1886. The Bill was referred to and emphatically condemned by the country. Although the verdict was taken on two Bills—the Home Rule Bill and the Land Purchase Bill—everybody knows that the Bill which did the greater damage to the Party opposite was the Land Purchase Bill. I know very well what the feeling was. I myself had a very difficult battle to fight, and I am convinced that the Home Rule Bill, backed by the great authority of Mr. Gladstone, would have undoubtedly been passed had it not been mixed up with this Irish Land Question. Therefore, I say that if this great revolution—as the Chief Secretary himself has called it—is to be passed, the precedent of 1886 ought to be followed, and the country consulted about it. In conclusion, I venture to say that this Bill is a bad Bill. Its finance is utterly unsound and will not stand examination. It is a Bill based on false hopes, false expectations, and false sentiment, and I believe, though it may be too late, that the British taxpayer, when he finds that he has parted with his money and lost control of his millions, will recognise that, by the very men whom he placed in office to safeguard and defend his interests, he has been duped, deluded, defrauded, and betrayed. I beg to move "That the Bill be read a second time this day six months."

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.), in seconding the Amendment, said: As a Unionist I feel bound to associate myself with my hon. friend in this matter. The Bill concerns England very largely, and therefore we, as the larger taxpayers, have a right to express our opinion. If I thought that this Bill would lead to the prosperity, contentment, happiness, and loyalty of Ireland, I, for one, would certainly support it, feeling that its enormous cost would be absolutely unimportant compared with those great advantages. I am sure that my constituents would willingly pay their large contribution to this fund if the results I have mentioned were likely to be secured. But, as my hon. friend has pointed out, this is not the first time we have had such a measure to deal with. I have been a Member of this House for many years, and when this Bill was introduced I looked up my election address of 1886. I know that in some quarters consistency is not considered of much importance, but some of us, at any rate, try to be consistent, and I cannot help thinking that, when such a measure as this is introduced, it is right we should look back and see what promises we have given on the matter. These are the words of my election address of 1886—

> "The heavy additional burden of taxation which the policy of the Government involves, in buying out the Irish landlords, seems to me to be both unjust and unnecessary to the English, Scotch, and Welsh taxpayers. To add even £50,000,000 to our National Debt—though it will probably be nearer £150,000,000—with a most uncertain return of even the interest on that enormous sum, in these distressed times, seems to me to be quite unwarranted."

The circumstances now are the same, or worse; taxation is considerably heavier; the National Debt is much larger; and I want to know, seeing that we held those views in 1886, what has changed to make it desirable that we should now depart from them. It is true that the words I have quoted were a statement of my own opinion, but that opinion was shared by the present Government; it was the "authorised version;" and we were emphatically told by our leaders that it was the policy of the Party on this side of the House. What circumstances have so completely changed that the course we held to be absolutely wrong and unfair to the English taxpayers in 1886 should now be the right policy to adopt? We are bound to ask ourselves why we should burden our constituents with this great charge. The Chief Secretary in his speech—to which I listened with interest and admiration—dealt graphically with the condition of many congested parts of Ireland, and from his remarks one would suppose that this Bill would amend that state of affairs. There is not a Member of this House but would do his utmost to achieve such an end. But these people are trying to live upon small patches of ground from which it is impossible to get a living, and all that this Bill will do is probably to reduce their rents. Nobody will say that a system of reducing rents can possibly make these people permanently prosperous. If we were to give them their holdings for nothing it would not place them in the condition in which we wish them to be. This Bill, by reducing the rents and placing an enormous burden on the people of this country, will do nothing to bring about the condition we desire, and I do not think it is quite candid to bring up this question, when the enormous advance of £150,000,000 will do practically nothing to go to the root of the evil in these congested districts. That being so, one of the greatest sources of satisfaction in any land scheme is taken from us.

Then the right hon. Gentleman referred to emigration, and said it was likely to be stopped by this Bill. He said it would "staunch the fatal stream of emigration." It seems to me that in these districts migration and emigration are the only means by which anything can be done. No doubt migration is at present more fashionable than emigration, but emigration has done a great deal for both Ireland and England. Why should the Irish Secretary, in order to gain a certain amount of superficial applause, run down a source from which, I think, Ireland has derived enormous benefit? Emigration exists in this country. Many of our own friends have gone abroad. Last year about 205,000 persons left Great Britain and Ireland, of which number only 40,000 were from Ireland. There is no doubt that emigration has done, is doing, and will do, a great amount of good, and it seems to me it is a mistake to run it down, seeing that this Bill cannot possibly solve the problem of the congested districts. What will be the result of the Bill for the small men paying about £5 a year rent? It will reduce their rent by about 20 per cent. Will anybody contend that, by reducing their rents by about 5d. per week, and enabling them to buy their holdings in sixty-eight years, you will make them successful and prosperous tenants? Such a small reduction cannot altogether change a man, and make him really prosperous. Is it reasonable or desirable, therefore, that this country should be called on to bear this heavy burden to achieve so small a result? Then take the larger holders, paying £40 or £50 a year rent. No doubt the reduction to them represents an appreciable amount, but I would ask: Are not these the men who do not really require it? They have shown their power of combination and of mutually arranging to look after their own interests, and I say emphatically it is not to the interests of the country that a large sum from public taxation should be applied to the reduction of the rents of that class. There are many people in our own districts who are far worse off, and who yet will be asked to contribute largely for the benefit of these men. I have worked it out carefully, and I find that the poor district which I have the honour to represent will have to guarantee about £500,000 of this money. It is neither fair nor reasonable that the English taxpayer should be asked to find money for this class of the peasantry of Ireland. I will go even farther. If, by reducing rents, you gave prosperity and happiness to Ireland, if that were the whole point of the Bill, I should say very little about it, and even the cost to the general taxpayer would not be considered so serious. But we know that that is not the whole point. There is the great question of re-sale. That seems to me to be at the bottom of this subject. I think we may ask fairly how this has worked in the past. To an Englishman it seems an extraordinary system by which to endeavour to improve the condition of Ireland. A man for generations has paid £40 a year rent as tenant; he has paid it willingly and is a fairly prosperous man. Mr. Gladstone's Bill came in and created fair rents, re-sale, and so on, and this man's holding was at once reduced to £28. What happened a short time afterwards? He sold his holding to a third party for £475 cash. What does that mean

MR. T. M. HEALY: He built a house on it

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: That is no part of the argument. The man was paying £40 a year, and he said he was so rack rented that he could not live. The Land Bill reduced the rent to £28, but the successor to that man was paying not only the £28 but £19 in addition, and for all practical purposes he has been, and is, paying £47 a year. I ask, in what way has that individual tenant benefited by Mr. Gladstone's Act. I could give other cases, but that is unnecessary. There have been twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty years purchase, and if that has been the case under the last Act what will be the effect under the present Act? If you further reduce those rents by 20 per cent. the £28 will be reduced to £23; the tenant will give about £200 more for his tenant-right, and 4 per cent. on that will make his rent £31. Surely that is no benefit to the individual tenant. It will not make Ireland more prosperous; it will not improve the tenants or prevent them being more rack-rented. In fact, every Act of this mistaken legislation goes further to increase the burden on the unfortunate tenant, and I, as a practical man, ask, in what manner is a man benefited who under Mr. Gladstone's Bill paid £47 and will now pay £55. Is it worth while for us to embark £150,000,000 of the capital of this country to bring about such a state of things? The next generation of Irish tenants will purchase or they will borrow money on the holdings. Practically speaking this will do no good, and we are encouraging them to borrow on their holdings, and that indebtedness will make them in a worse position than before. Is it therefore worth while to embark an enormous sum of popular credit to increase this evil? Mr. Gladstone's measure no doubt satisfied the Irish people for a short time, and this one may last for a few years. It may last the time of the present Secretary, but it cannot finally settle or put right this question. If you are going on a wrong basis you cannot make it right by a system such as this, and although I know I am speaking quite uselessly I must enter my protest. The hon. Member for Waterford said this is not a settlement, that he wanted a number of things, and that this was regarded as a step to Home Rule—a step this Party will always resist. I say again, as an English Member, is it desirable that we should embark this enormous sum of money when the leaders of the Irish people recognise that it is not a settlement? Even Lord Dunraven's speech suggests the same view. I venture to think that what is wanted in every nation is for the people to make an effort to improve their condition. In this country, if a man is paying £20 a year rent and wants to buy we say to him—"Make an effort, and instead of paying £20 pay £25," and in twenty or twenty-five years time the property becomes his own. There is no great merit in a man buying unless it produces greater energy and exertion and industry in the individual. In England we do this class of business in a common sense way, and that effort is the making of the man. It is the thing which induces a tenant to feel every year that he will live to see the time when he has bought his house through his own effort and industry. That improves the man and makes him a better citizen, a better man in every way. But in Ireland we do not adopt a system like that. We say to a man, "Do you want to buy?" and he answers, perhaps, that he is not particular. We say, "You are paying £20 a year, and instead of that you shall pay £15 a year for sixty-eight and a half years." It is no inducement to them, because neither he nor his children are likely to take the same interest in looking forward to the end of the term, and it is fatal to do away with that interest. It is a wrong system entirely. If you could get an Irish tenant to pay a higher rent for twenty-five years you would do some good for him and make him a better citizen and a better man, even if he still held to Home Rule.

Then it is said that this Bill is going to do away with what is recognised as a great evil that was introduced by Mr. Gladstone — that of dual ownership. No doubt that would be a great advantage, but does the Bill do away with it? Certainly it does not do it for sixty-eight and a half years, and what is the difference whether a man pays to the landlord or to the State. He is not the owner until the end of the period. The present landlord is not what can be called a real landlord, as Mr. Gladstone's Bill provided for a rent-charge. In my opinion, this will not get rid of dual ownership, and we are only living in a fool's paradise if we think it does. You are doing away with the real use of this system of purchase, because if you can induce a tenant to pay a higher rent for a shorter period it would be a *bonâ-fide* purchase. I would ask, what will be the consequences of the Act? It is said that 80,000 or 100,000 persons are now purchasing under existing Acts. That is true; but 80,000 or 100,000 persons is a very different thing to the whole of the Irish people. We have heard of a "No Rent" manifesto, and it seems to me quite conceivable that we might have a similar manifesto here. We know when the law is called upon by the present landlords to enforce an eviction what a state of things is created; and is it conceivable that a system like that will be allowed to go on when the State is the landlord. It seems to me that this is an impossible position. Mr. Davitt says most emphatically that he wishes to see the whole matter left as it is; that no one has proposed, or will propose, outside a political lunatic asylum, that the British Government can be got to put itself in the position of a rent collector. When the Irish tenant cannot, or will not, or does not choose to pay his rent, the Imperial Government knows perfectly well that to have tenants evicted by the Government of the day would be a perfectly impossible thing. Then there is the question of saving of expense. We could not stop the police or the judges. And again I ask, is it wise to run the enormous risk of this gigantic sum of money on security such as this, which will not tend in any way to improve the Irish people, but will land us in a very serious position?

Now I come to another point. How are we to judge of the position of Ireland at the present time? Are we lending Ireland money for the common good of the Empire? No doubt we hear now in Ireland words of pleasantness, but only a few months ago, when we had a war in South Africa, every Irish Member was doing his best against us, and, with this fact before us, surely it is reasonable to hesitate before making an enormous advance to a country which boasts and claims to be disloyal in every possible way. I will refer to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford upon the occasion of the proposed visit of His Majesty. Surely that is not a satisfactory state of things in a country to which we are proposing to lend these millions. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said that to the Nationalists the King represented a system of government which they regarded as usurpation, and that he was not their constitutional Sovereign; and in his judgment they were absolutely debarred from extending to the King any official reception. Knowing that Home Rule is not abandoned, and that this position of disloyalty is still maintained, it does seem to me, as an Englishman, an extraordinary policy to grant to Ireland £150,000,000 of money with these facts before us. As regards the financial position there is no doubt that the expenditure of this country is growing by leaps and bounds, and we now seem to go out of our way to spend money. I should agree to any expenditure which would have a tendency to make Ireland prosperous, contented, and peaceful, but, considering the points I have raised, it does seem to me an extraordinary thing that we should embark, after the enormous expenditure we have been put to, upon this large sum under the circumstances I have referred to. I represent a constituency, part of which contains people as poor as any of the constituencies in Ireland, and many of them find it hard to live at the present time; and, therefore, to impose upon my constituency another half-million of money is a very large thing to propose. If this sum would make things peaceable in Ireland my constituency would agree to it, but although they are willing and anxious to be generous they do think that there should be a reasonable prospect of success before the Government embark upon this large expenditure of public money. Looking at the past and at the result of the recent measures upon this question, and seeing that this Bill does not promote any self-effort amongst Irishmen but rather tends to prevent it; seeing that it runs the terrible risk of making the State the landlord over a disloyal area, I cannot see why my constituents should alter the decision they arrived at in 1886, by an enormous majority upon this question. I have always put this question forward, and whenever I have done so in my own constituency, I have been enthusiastically supported when I said that we could not run this enormous risk for Ireland. In view of the circumstances I have referred to, and looking to the condition of Ireland and her gradually increasing prosperity, financial and otherwise, it does seem to me wrong that we should go out of our way to inflict this enormous burden upon the English, Scotch and Welsh constituencies, and although I should be willing to vote for any sum of money to make Ireland more prosperous, I say that by this Bill we are departing from those rules upon which alone a country can grow, namely, by promoting self-effort and self-reliance, and the only way we can do this is not by reducing the rents but by making them try to pay a higher rent for a short time, by which means alone you can test whether they are willing to make that effort. Under these circumstances I venture with great regret to differ from the Front Bench, I cannot see any circumstances which have happened since 1886 to change my view, and at that time my view was supported by the present Leader of this House. Therefore I am bound to adhere, in order to be consistent, to the position I then took up.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is by no means the first time that I have asked the House to listen to observations of mine on the subject of Irish land and on the subject of Irish land purchase. I rise thus early in the debate because on this occasion, unlike some other occasions, it is not I who am in charge of the Bill, and therefore, it is not I who will have to deal with its details. My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary, who is responsible for the framing of the Bill, and whose admirable speech on its introduction is still fresh in the minds of hon. Members, will, of course, conclude the debate on behalf of the Government. Therefore, if at this early stage I trespass upon the time of the House, it is not for the purpose of dealing with the criticisms of the Bill contained in the able speech of the hon. Member for Waterford. That hon. Gentleman would be the first to admit that the critical part of his speech was directed, not to the principle of the measure, but to its details. That was what he began by saying, and ended by saying. But, although criticisms coming from such a representative quarter, and couched in terms of such admirable lucidity, give proper food for reflection, I venture to say that their adequate discussion and final solution must be reserved for the Committee stage of the Bill, and cannot be properly dealt with at the present time. It is otherwise with the speeches which followed. The two hon. Gentlemen who rose on this side of the House expressed objections to the measure, based, not upon this clause or upon that, based not upon this or that aspect of the Bill, but cutting down to its very root and affecting its very essence. It is to deal with these broader objections to our scheme that I rise, rather than with the relatively unimportant points which are likely to be raised by Irish Members, because, as I understand, all parties in Ireland are agreed that this Bill is, at all events, of such sufficient merit that it is right and proper to consider it in Committee. But the hon. Members with whom I propose to deal do not allow the Bill even that modest merit, and they think that, even at this early stage, its life should be cut short. Owing to causes over which I had no control, I was obliged to be away during parts of the speeches of the mover and seconder of the rejection of the Bill. They both aimed at the same object, and, as far as I have been able to judge, they both used many arguments of a similar kind. But unless the specimens of the two speeches which I heard very inadequately, conveyed their general tenor, the spirit which moved the seconder appeared to be very different from the spirit which animated the eloquence of the mover. I do not mean to go into this matter in any controversial fashion, nor do I mean to bandy repartees with the hon. Member for Stroke-upon-Trent. But I should like, in the few observations I propose to make, to address myself to the essence of the case; and I hope I shall be able to convince both hon. Gentlemen that the party, of which they are such distinguished ornaments, does not deserve the obloquy which they seemed desirous of pouring upon it.

If I rightly understood the arguments of the seconder of the Amendment, he seemed to think that the Government in asking him to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill are asking him to vote precisely in contradiction of the policy which that same Government, or many of its members, asked him to support in 1886, when the Home Rule Bill and its accompanying measure of land purchase were before the country. My hon. friend is really quite mistaken. It makes me feel how old a Member of the House I am getting when I find the history of land purchase in Ireland so totally misunderstood by friends of mine on this side of the House. What is the history of land purchase in Ireland, or, rather, let me ask, What is the history of the use of the credit of the country in aid of land purchase in Ireland? Its Parliamentary history, so far as I know, began in 1883. [OPPOSITION cries of "1869."] What national credit was given in 1869? [OPPOSITION cries of "The Church money."] The Church money? But I am dealing with the use of the credit of the country, not of any Irish fund in aid of land purchase; and I say it began, so far as my memory serves me, in 1883. I happened to be concerned in what I believe to be the initial procedure of land purchase, based on the credit of the State; and the fact, therefore, lives in my memory. In 1881 Mr. Gladstone carried out to its extreme issue the policy inaugurated in 1870 with regard to Irish land. The principle of free contract as between landlord and tenant, which was altered by the Act of 1870, was in 1881 wholly destroyed. I am not going to criticise the Act of 1881. Even its most bitter enemies —and I am afraid I must count myself one of them—must in historical fairness admit that the Government of that day had to deal with a crisis of extreme and rpessing difficulty. It is easy to say that the Bill was founded on utterly unsound principles—principles which were seen to be unsound at the time, and which experience has shown year by year to be even more unsound than was anticipated. It is much easier, however, to say that than to say what I should have done, or anybody else should have done, had they been suddenly made responsible for the government of Ireland in 1881, in the middle of the great land revolution. Therefore, I do not approach the subject in any polemical spirit, or with any desire to rake up old Parliamentary controversies. But the Act of 1881 was passed against the strong feeling and the vehement criticism of the Party to which I belong; and we, or some of us, saw that the only possible way of bringing these evils to an end was by promoting land purchase, and that the only way to promote land purchase effectually was to employ the credit of the State to carry out that great national object. In 1883 my noble friend the present Secretary of State for India moved a Motion on a Tuesday afternoon which I had the honour of seconding. He went into the details of a particular scheme and I contented myself with laying down the broad principles, which have stood the test of time and which have been embodied in every land purchase measure since. I claim no credit for it, only it does surprise me to be accused of inconsistency when I reflect that just twenty years ago I began to preach the cause which I am now pleading to the best of my ability. While the Party to which I belong were in opposition we advocated the principle. We came into power in 1885, for the first time after the system of Court-regulated rents was carried into action by the Act of 1881, and in 1885 we passed the first practical measure of land purchase with the use of State credit which is on the Statute-book. That was passed by the present Lord Ashbourne, and by a Ministry of which some on this Bench and, certainly, I was a member.

MR. COGHILL: For a sum of £5,000,000.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You have to make a beginning. And I suppose the hon. Gentleman's constituents were concerned even with a sum of £5,000,000. May I remind the hon. Gentleman that to lend even £5,000,000 in 1885 might naturally be regarded as a far more risky transaction than lending twenty times that sum now? That was the beginning of the policy of land purchase by the aid of British credit during our short Administration. It lasted, I think, only about seven months. In the Spring of 1886 Mr. Gladstone came in with his Home Rule Bill, and it is quite true that he then proposed, in addition to his Home Rule scheme, to lend £150,000,000 on British credit.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): £50,000,000.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I do not quarrel over that. I understand every landlord could require his tenants to purchase, and all the agricultural land in Ireland, not merely the land dealt with in this Bill, came within the scope of that Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): What was the price?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Twenty years purchase on the first-term rents. Mr. Gladstone's proposal involved a potential burden—I do not put it higher than that—on British credit up to the total capital value of every species of agricultural land in Ireland. It is perfectly true that we opposed that proposal; and if such a proposal was made again I should oppose it to the best of my ability. For what was that proposal? It was part of a Home Rule scheme; and one reason, or one great reason, why I think it was right to oppose it was that, even putting aside Home Rule, it gave every landlord the power to compel the tenant to buy at a certain price, whether the tenant wanted to or not, if the landlord wished to sell. Well, I do not think that is a very good basis for the security of a national loan. If you compel a man to borrow from the State, whether he wants to borrow from the State or not, you have less right to complain if you ultimately find that he does not want to pay. That was the first vice in Mr. Gladstone's land purchase scheme. But the second vice was a far greater one. It was associated with Home Rule. What we were lending to was the Irish Government, a separate Irish Government—an Irish Government which by the very fact that we became its creditor had a new motive for quarrelling with us. I confess I still think that, though that Bill was undoubtedly brought forward with the very best motive—I mean the motive of preventing any possible injury to the Irish landlords by the passage of the Home Rule scheme—though the motive was excellent, I think the method was absolutely and essentially vicious, partly because the money was lent on a radically wrong system, and partly because it was inextricably bound up with a system of Home Rule which was not only bad in itself, but which made the security become bad in our view. What is the difference between that scheme and the scheme of my right hon. friend? I do not want to say a word more against Mr. Gladstone's scheme than I am obliged to, because I do not wish to quarrel with any Gentleman on the other side But surely even the brief outline I have given to the House shows how deep and wide is the difference which separates the present plan from the vast plan which Mr. Gladstone conceived, at the same time fundamentally altering the constitution of the country, and buying out all the landlords of whatsoever character and degree, and having this done by the tenants compulsorily. It is curious that my two hon. friends, who have dwelt so much on the 1886 Bill, which is no parallel to this measure, have absolutely forgotten the 1891 Bill, which is an exact parallel.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): And the Bill of 1888.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, there was another Bill passed in 1888. That was passed by a Unionist Government. The true parallel, however, to this Bill is the 1891 Bill, to which I have not heard a single word of reference from my hon. friends. I am perfectly sure no hon. Member would get up and speak on the subject of land purchase who had not so far mastered the subject as, at all events, to know something of the 1891 Bill; and I am surprised to hear a charge of inconsistency put gently and kindly by my hon. friend the seconder, and put not gently nor kindly by the mover of the Motion. I am amazed to find such a charge brought forward by hon. Members who surely must have known that this Bill is exactly on all fours with, and, indeed, is simply an extension of, a measure I had the honour of bringing in first in 1890, and then of carrying through the House in 1891.

MR. COGHILL: Was that Bill for £150,000,000?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman does not even know that this Bill is for £150,000,000.

MR. COGHILL: I think I am right in stating that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I think you are wrong. Of course, the hon. Gentleman has a perfect right to his opinion, because it is not a thing you can mathematically demonstrate; but certainly the estimate of my right hon. friend in charge of this Bill is for £100,000,000, and not £150,000,000.

MR. COGHILL: I notice that at the Landlords' Convention the figure was distinctly stated at £150,000,000.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to say anything painful to Gentlemen in the House on either side, but I should not always go to an Irish source for accurate information. This Bill is, then, not for £150,000,000, but for £100,000,000. The estimate of the Treasury, made two years ago, quite irrespective of this Bill, would have warranted, I think, an advance of £60,000,000, and my right hon. friend informs me that he has in the guarantee fund, without going to the land at all, absolute security for an advance of at least £90,000,000. Then my hon. friend asks, "What is the nature of the security, and can you enforce it?" I think, undoubtedly, we can enforce it under the only conceivable conditions in which it is likely to be required; and those conditions were laid down by my hon. friend himself. Supposing you have a conspiracy stretching over the whole of Ireland or the whole of a county, embracing, as it would, the great majority of the population, for the purpose of defrauding the State and the taxpayers of this country who have done their best, at all events, in this matter to treat them with generosity. Do they not know that the Government of Ireland may refuse absolutely, without scruple or remorse, to give a shilling of the guarantee fund? If they will not pay their debts they must find the money to carry on their local government. I see no difficulty at all; and if you ask me about the contingency, I say that it is in the highest degree improbable. I can conjure up a gloomy picture of Ireland where the whole tenantry are conspiring to refuse to pay their debts. In these circumstances, let the tenantry of Ireland, who are the ratepayers of Ireland, manage their own local affairs without coming to the British Exchequer. If they wish to rob the British Exchequer the British Exchequer would be none the worse. But, after all, why should we disquiet ourselves with these vague imaginings? I quite agree when the Government of 1891 brought forward what I may call the parent Bill, that then there might have been reason for these gloomy vaticinations. Then, indeed, the experience of the Ashbourne Act, satisfactory as far as it went, the experience of land purchase under the old Bright clauses, satisfactory as far as it went, leads me not to view with surprise the fact that many critics, who are now converts to a great extension of the use of British credit for Irish land purchase, looked with disquiet on such a large transaction as was contemplated in that Bill. Ireland was far more disturbed than it is now. The ground swell over the tremendous conflict of the Tithes Act had hardly calmed, and extreme bitterness of feeling raged between the two parties; and I quite understand the unnecessary gloom of any prophet who might have said that it was too great a risk to throw on the British taxpayer. I did not agree with them then. The Unionist Party of 1891 passed the Bill of which I speak, but since then what has been our experience? Ireland has gone through many changes. Then perhaps all the hopes of hon. Members opposite were raised by the advent to power of Mr. Gladstone in 1893. They were dashed again by the defeat of the Home Rule Party in 1895; but all through that time the instalments had been paid with absolute regularity. We know, and know with a long period of experience behind us, that the public sentiment in Ireland is not in favour of repudiating debts. We know that the view of what is honest and honourable does not include that species of repudiation. My hon. friend may say that he sees no difference between a debt to a landlord and a debt to the State. I am not disposed to disagree with my hon. friend, but that is not the view of the Irish tenants. For historic reasons, and very painful historic reasons, a state of things has grown up in which undoubtedly in the mind of the Irish tenant there is a broad difference between a debt owed to the landlord and a debt due to the State; and I have no reason whatever to think that the settled view of the Irish tenantry is likely to be disturbed in any event we can foresee, and in which it may be regarded as an honourable or tolerable transaction for the tenantry to repudiate their obligations. Let us suppose that in a county a third or a half of the tenantry repudiate their obligations. Immediately on all the rest of their brethren would be thrown the charge on the rates for carrying out local purposes, because the guarantee fund would be drawn upon automatically. No doubt the tenants would have to be sold up, not in the interests of the British creditor but in the interests of the Irish ratepayer. That is a very different thing. Every Irish ratepayer in the county would have the strongest interest in seeing that he was not burdened with a debt because his neighbour did not choose to fulfil his legal obligations.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: Who would sell him up? What authority?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Estates Commission. Does not my hon. friend see that the Government would have behind them the whole sentiment of the community? And, if they did not, the worst that would happen would be that the community would lose its contributions from the Imperial fund for the purpose. So I venture to say, with great respect to my hon. friends, that I have proved, or have gone far to prove, two things. I have absolutely proved one thing. We have shown ourselves consistent in this policy of land purchase. Ever since the great land difficulties in Ireland arose, ever since 1881, and explicitly since 1883 it has been the policy of the Unionist Party to substitute by land purchase a system of single ownership for that system of dual ownership established in 1881, under peculiar circumstances, but having within it the seeds of failure, seeds which have borne an abundant and most dangerous harvest. That is the first thing I have proved; and the second thing I have proved is that there is no danger to British credit or to the hon. Member's constituents for having, we think, proposed in 1903, no more than was actually proposed in 1891. There only remains for me to answer to the best of my ability one further question. It is a question raised by the seconder towards the end of his speech. He said—

> "Here you are conferring a great boon upon a relatively small section of the British community; and what is this section? Is it a loyal or orderly section? No, it is neither loyal nor orderly. Why, then, are you to single them out for this special mark of favour? Are there not poor people in Stoke and in Islington? Why are the people in Stoke and Islington, always loyal and law-abiding, not singled out for this mark of Imperial favour, and why is it given to those who, whatever their benefits may be, are neither loyal nor law-abiding?"

It is a very plausible, but a very fallacious question. I remember urging on the House in some of the old controversies we had on this subject, when I was fighting side by side with my hon. friend for land purchase against hon. Members opposite, that this question of Irish land could not be regarded as a local question affecting the Irish tenant and landlord alone, it was a question which for various reasons and in consequence of many causes had become a question of Imperial magnitude. That opinion I held twenty years ago; I held it ten years ago; and I hold it now more strongly than ever.

The Chief Secretary gave some short account of the condition of Irish land tenure in the speech in which he introduced the Bill. But I hardly know whether hon. Members who are not acquainted personally with Ireland, have in their minds the enormous difference between the land system in that country and the land system which prevails in England and Scotland. I do not believe there is a vital or important point in which these two systems are not at absolute variance. To begin with, English and Scottish land are marketable commodities. I admit, speaking as a landowner, I wish there were more purchasers, and that I could say that the turn of the market was more in our favour than it is at the present moment. But English and Scottish land always has been a marketable commodity. Irish land is not, and has not been for years, a marketable commodity. There are no purchasers for it outside the actual tenants. Why? Partly for reasons going far back into the beginnings of Irish history and the beginnings of English rule in Ireland; partly also from the direct and inevitable result of the two Acts of 1870 and 1881. Who is going to buy a commodity the value of which is settled not by the free play of supply and demand, but by three well-paid Land Commissioners whom each party thinks bear very hardly upon them, but who, at all events, never can give a verdict with which either will be content? Property held in these circumstances never can be a marketable commodity. That is one of the first great differences between English and Irish land. Another great difference closely allied with it, but worthy of separate consideration, is that about one-sixth or one-seventh of the Irish land does not in any sense belong to the landlord at all, but is managed by a Court and by a Judge. How can you manage land by Judges? The Judge may be a Solomon come to judgment, and with every qualification that a Judge can have, but the idea that one-sixth or one seventh of the whole agricultural property of an agricultural community can be and ought to be managed by a Judge sitting in a law Court is surely so absurd that if it did not happen in a country where Englishmen may think that many absurd things happen inevitably, it would not be tolerated for a moment. Another great difference between English and Irish land—and this is most vital—is that in England and Scotland the land is owned by one man, it is cultivated by another, but the capital and the instruments for cultivating it are provided partly by the owner and partly by the farmer; and even that is really a very great understatement of the case, because, speaking from my own experience, the amount of money which a Scotch landlord has to put into his farm in the shape of buildings and permanent improvements is far greater than the tenant is asked to put in. And the tenant's capital is of course recoverable. When he leaves, he takes his capital with him. In Ireland you have a system under which—again for historic reasons—the landlord does not spend a shilling on his property. There was a certain number of what were called English managed estates before 1870, but since then that landlord would be thought a very rash speculator who put money into his land; and since 1881 such a landlord would have been fit to have been shut up. Of course you cannot ask them to put money into their land, and they have not done it. But what is the inevitable result? When a tenant is evicted for not paying his rent, he cannot carry off with him his farm buildings; and there is a sense of proprietary right, which also has its origin in and which has been supplemented and fostered by many historic traditions—a sense of co-ownership which has never existed in England or Scotland, but which may be seen embodied in the Ulster custom, and any one may see it at work there. When to all these differences you add the other great difference which has been alluded to just now for another purpose, that every transaction is regulated by a Court, I declare that you have the most intolerable land system that the world has ever seen.

I can imagine no fault attaching to any land system which does not attach to the Irish system. It has all the faults of peasant proprietary; it has all the faults of feudal landlordism; it has all the faults incident to a system under which the landlords spend no money on their property and under which a large part of the land is managed by a Court. It has all the faults incident to the fact that it is the tenant's interest to let his farm run out of cultivation as the term for revising the judicial rent approaches. And while you have in the landlords a class of men admirably qualified, in my opinion, to do their duty to and be friendly with the population among whom they live—to be the leaders of thought and social improvement and of the work of local government—you have them ranged permanently in opposition to their tenants, who bring them into Court every fifteen years, to diminish their income by a formidable percentage at each operation. In addition, you have a system under which this country is burdened, and the Irish landlords and tenants are burdened, with a weight of litigation which in itself is intolerable. We have to pay £140,000 a year for Irish Land Courts to decide rents in Ireland. But what have the Irish landlords and tenants to pay in addition to that £140,000 a year for all the mass of litigation which drags wearily on year after year, embittering both parties, and enriching no one except the lawyers? If any one is ingenious enough to find an additional fault which attaches to some other land system, and which does not attach to the Irish land system, I do not say that I will follow the fashion of the day by giving a prize, but I shall be extremely grateful for the discovery. Are we to sit and see this go on—the evils not diminishing, as Mr. Gladstone hoped, but gradually accumulating? Mr Gladstone, when he introduced the great Act of 1881, hoped that litigation would be little used, and that when the value of the farm was settled, no further legal process would take place in respect of it, and that the land purchase clauses of that Act would prove to be of some effect. Those hopes have been utterly and absolutely dissipated by experience. The very same experience which has proved how beneficial is land purchase has also proved how pernicious are Court-fixed rents.

My hon. friend who seconded the Amendment wondered whether land purchase had produced good effects. I believe that no one who has seen the holdings which have been purchased entertains, or can entertain, a moment's doubt on that point. My hon. friend feels that the reduction offered by this Bill to the tenants—not greater than the reduction offered by other Bills—is too large. Let him remember that a reduction is not like a rent, a thing to be modified in favour of the tenants in bad years, and may be favourable to the landlord in years of good prices. It is a thing fixed for ever. You cannot fix it, and it would be absurd to try, at anything like the rack-rent of the holding. That would inevitably lead to something like, I will not say repudiation, but inevitable failure to pay in some cases. But my hon. friend may rest assured of this—that if the purchaser of Irish land does get a reduction upon the nominal amount of the rent which he pays to the landlord, he puts into the land which is to become his own an amount of work and energy to which even the security given under the Land Bill of 1881, a security not to be despised, was quite unable to stimulate him. I do not see how any one making a survey of these circumstances can doubt the value of the procedure we initiate. But my hon. friend says—Though the plan may be good in itself, although it may have much to recommend it, why is it to be done for these disloyal people? Well, the Bill is not intended to make people loyal I admit that. It is not intended to turn Home Rulers into Unionists. I admit that. But it is intended to take away one of those sores which fester and which aggravate every political movement which might otherwise be innocuous. I do not venture to prophesy when or how soon there will be any widespread revulsion of Irish Nationalist sentiment in favour of this country. Emotions which are the result of long generations of ancient and bitter traditions are not easy to blot out. They die hard. They leave traces of bitterness long after the causes which have first produced them have become only matters of historical and speculative interest. If my hon. friend thinks that loyalty is to be promoted and the Union aided by keeping up in Ireland anything in the nature of the intolerable and absurd system which now prevails there, surely my hon. friend is mistaken. We do not recommend this Bill to the House as the means of converting any man to the political opinions which we hold. We think that good government and contentment ought to end and will end, ought to tend and will tend—I will put it in that more moderate form—to a harmony of feeling between every section of the community, whether in Ireland, Scotland, or England. But the primary object of this measure is to substitute a good system of land tenure for a bad system, and to remove some of those intolerable absurdities, partly due to evils handed down to us from ancient history, and partly due to the well-meant but erring attempts of this country to cure those evils, which resulted in making the Irish land laws a chaos and a by-word. They reflect the utmost discredit upon the powers of British statesmanship, and I trust my right hon. friend's Bill will do much to remove them.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The two speeches from hon. Members opposite to which we have listened have had the most happy effect of evoking from the right hon. Gentleman one of the most masterly vindications of Irish Land Reform that I have ever heard in this House. We could not help saying to one another, as the right hon. Gentleman proceeded, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" All the old arguments that were used in favour of the Acts of 1870 and 1881 were again forcibly expressed by the right hon. Gentleman. The tenant, he says, has put his all into the soil, and when he is turned out he cannot carry away his buildings. The right hon. Gentleman says that the system amounted to co-ownership.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman should be polemical. What I said was that the peculiarities of the Irish system, by which the tenant did all the improvements, naturally fostered in the bosom of the tenant a sentiment of co-ownership.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: So far from being polemical against the right hon. Gentleman's present mood, I am delighted with it. The arguments which he now uses were the arguments used by the advocates of the Acts of 1870 and 1881; and the position of things which he describes was the position always denied and repudiated by the Party to which the right hon. Gentleman belongs. We do not look a gift horse in the mouth; and when we find the right hon. Gentleman so entirely approving the whole line of argument which was used in defence of Mr. Gladstone's policy, we can only express our obligations to him. But the right hon. Gentleman said that notwithstanding, he was one of the bitterest enemies of the Act of 1881. Where would his Land Purchase Acts have been if it had not been for the Act of 1881? The Act of 1881 not only relieved the Irish tenant from a position of helplessness, in which he was very often harshly treated, it not only gave him fixity of tenure, it also apportioned as between landlord and tenant their respective interests in the soil, and it established Courts to determine them. We hear of first-term and second-term tenants, and it is upon the respective interests of those classes that the whole arrangement of the present Bill is based. Where would the right hon. Gentleman have been with all his Land Purchase Acts, of which he has recited a series, if it had not been for this much denounced Act of 1881? I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman, even for a moment, should have thought that I was assuming a polemical tone in reply to his exceedingly conciliatory tone; on the contrary, I am delighted to find that he now appreciates, perhaps a little better than he did thirty years ago, the real situation of the Irish case. In my observations on this Bill I wish to view it from the point of view from which the mover and seconder of the Amendment view it, although I cannot come to the same conclusion. We have heard a great deal in the different conferences and negotiations that have taken place, as far as we have been permitted knowledge of them, of the point of view of the landlord and of the tenant; I want to look at it from the point of view of the Imperial taxpayer. This is the time and place where his case ought to be examined and his interests secured. The main object of this measure is to eliminate the landlord from the agrarian system of Ireland, and, at the same time, and as a necessary consequence, to establish a general system of cultivating and occupying ownership. But it will be asked, why, if the Irish landlords have become by their own faults or misfortunes either superfluous or obnoxious to the agrarian system in Ireland—why must Imperial money be given or credit used for their deliverance? The reason for that is that we are responsible for the landlords, we are responsible for their actions in the past, and if they are subjected, any of them or as a class, to popular odium, that odium attaches to us also. I have here some very plain and forcible words of Mr. Gladstone's which I think put the case very clearly. He said, in introducing his Bill in 1886—

> "The Irish landlords have been the heirs of a sad inheritance. They have taken up, and been compelled to take up, dismal and deplorable traditions; and when oppression has wrought its very painful experience into the heart and mind of the people, it is not in a moment, not in a year, not in a generation, that the traces of that painful, and dreadful process can be effaced. We desire, by exhibiting the utmost consideration for the imperilled class—or, at any rate, for the class impressed deeply with apprehension—the Irish landlords—to do everything on their behalf which duty will allow us to do. The deeds of the Irish landlords are, to a great extent, our deeds. We are *participes criminis*; we, with power in our hands, looked on; we not only looked on but we encouraged and sustained. I have said that the landlords were our garrison in Ireland. Let me a little unfold that sentence. We planted them there, and we replanted them. In 1641, in 1688, and again in 1798, we reconquered the country for them."

That historical fact differentiates the position of the Irish landlord from that of ordinary landlords in any other part of the United Kingdom, and gives them a higher claim to our consideration. That argument used to be familiar to us in the old debates, which with the old arguments are now vanishing from men's minds. It is well to renew them. But, without resorting to these lofty historical reasons, I found myself upon a more humble and practical argument, which in my estimation is really the compelling force for this Bill, namely, that this policy has no alternative and that there is no escape.

I am not going to enter on a discussion of Mr. Gladstone's Bill in its general merits. The right hon. Gentleman has put the Bill of 1886 aside on the ground of this and that objection. If I remember the circumstances of that day aright, the Land Purchase Bill was the more obnoxious of the two measures; and as the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent rightly said, if the Home Rule Bill had stood alone it would probably have passed into law. It was on the Land Bill that the whole hostility of the self-styled Unionist Party directed itself at that time. That Bill is, of course, no longer heard of, but the Unionist Party thereupon began their series of fragmentary and tentative Acts. What has been the result of those Acts? There are at present some 80,000 tenants under them paying instalments at a far lower rate than the tenants who are not purchasing their holdings. We are glad to know from Mr. Bailey's report, and otherwise, that these tenants are doing exceedingly well, and that the whole transaction is succeeding. But what is the effect of it in a locality—and to my mind this is the governing argument in the whole matter. In a locality you had two neighbours, each paying the same sum in rent to different landlords. One landlord is able and willing to sell, the other landlord is either unable or unwilling; the man whose landlord can sell receives immediately a large reduction in his annual payment, and has only to pay that for a certain limited period of years and the property becomes his own. Do you expect his neighbour to go on contentedly paying the full rent with no such expectation in prospect? That is the key to the whole position, in my opinion. It has been for some time evident that a large and larger stride forward must be taken, and I have myself on more than one occasion voted for a strenuous resolution to that effect. So long as this inequality exists discontent will exist in proportion to the extent of the inequality; and my feeling with regard to this Bill is not that it is too large, but I have considerable fear whether it will really, on a sufficiently large scale, be sufficient to compel obliteration of the inequality. It appears to me that the interest of the taxpayer is not so much concerned with the landlord's part of the arrangement as with the tenant's. If the idea of compulsion is ruled out, reliance must be placed on inducing the landlord to part with his property—the same sort of gentle influence that we have heard of in South Africa. He is to be "induced"; he is to be tempted by a bonus; and, in my opinion, the amount of the bonus ought to be only sufficient, not more, to effect this object and to acquit the English people of the obligation to which I have referred, the obligation of the reasonable extrication of the landlord from his position. This bonus, of course, is plainly the interest of the taxpayer; but when the landlord has received his money and the arrangement is complete he disappears from the agrarian problem. *Abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit.* He either lives, as I trust the great majority of them will continue to live, in his old home among his old neighbours or he seeks other climes; in any case he is gone; as far as the British taxpayer is concerned he is done with. But the tenant remains for nearly seventy years. This Bill is not merely a great financial operation for effecting an agrarian revolution; it is an international convention, to last for nearly seventy years, during which time we, the taxpayers, shall be the landlord, and the Irish peasantry will date their economical condition, whether it be one of prosperity or misery, from the year in which the terms of the redemption of their holdings were prescribed. The essential lines of such a measure, then, cannot surely be examined too closely.

I wish to impress on the House this fact, that the interest of the taxpayer is bound up in the interests of the tenant. Let me speak frankly. The people of this Island do not like this Bill—I am sure I shall not be contradicted in any quarter—they are being led quietly and judiciously up to it, but their attitude towards it is that of a shying horse. They shrink from this huge employment of their credit and this huge gift of their cash in order to oust from their property a set of men against whom they themselves have no complaint, and in order to instal in possession those farmers who happen at this juncture to be holding land. But the people of this country are well disposed towards Ireland; they have a notion that they have a duty to do to Ireland; and now they are told that, if some such great scheme as this is adopted, all classes in Ireland will be friends, old feuds will be forgotten, new prosperity and industries will arise, the government of the country will be made easy, the preposterous force of constabulary will be no longer necessary, and other proofs of peace and order and happiness will begin. What I say is, once convince our countrymen that these things will be attained, and I altogether mistake them if they will not support you in the effort to achieve them, and stretch, not one or two, but any number of points to do it. But my point is that this altogether hangs on the terms imposed on the tenants. You have got to satisfy the people of this country that what they desire will be attained. If you satisfy them of that they will support your scheme gladly. The question is, how can you satisfy them of it? You have to show them that the terms to be paid by the tenant are equitable, that they bear the test of matters of business, that they will bear the brunt of low prices and bad seasons, and that they will create substantial equality of conditions among the peasantry throughout Ireland. It will not be enough if the first impression only made on the minds of the peasantry is favourable. A reduction of something you have to pay once a year is always cheerfully taken, and, if I may twist the words of Scripture, I would say that no relaxation of rent for the present seemeth grievous, but joyous. But we have to look forward five, ten, or fifty years hence and see how matters will stand then. I am not thinking of repudiation, but of a possible breakdown. What does this scheme mean—the scheme of the payment of a fixed rent for seventy years before the joys of ownership and independence can be attained? One generation will pass away, and another will come and go, and we shall be in the middle of a third, and still the instalments will be going on; and I will ask hon. Members who have any knowledge of affairs in England and Scotland, where will you get a farmer anywhere who, paying anything that could be dignified by the name of rent, would take a lease for seventy years? In Scotland we had an immemorial system of nineteen years leases. That was almost as fixed an institution as the Sabbath day itself. Now you will not get a farmer to take a nineteen years lease. They do not wish owing to the fluctuation of prices and other reasons, to tie themselves for that time. Therefore it is on this ground that I say that, with the prospect of this long term during which a fixed instalment is demanded, it is most necessary that the terms given to the tenants should be closely looked into. It is only in Committee that this complex question can be sifted and settled; and, to my mind, it depends entirely on the result of the consideration of this and other matters in Committee whether the promises of peace, which alone can justify the demands made on the taxpayer, are secured by the Bill.

Now, so far as I can judge the terms, they are not satisfactory as they are stated in the Bill. It is an exceedingly difficult matter to get at unless you go back to the old-fashioned way of calculating by the number of years' purchase. The right hon. Gentleman skillfully avoided any reference to years' purchase in his speech on the introduction of the Bill. If we take that test, and strike the mean between what we now know to be the maximum and the minimum years purchase of the first and second-term tenants, for the first-term tenant I take it to be twenty-two years, and for the second-term tenant and the non-judicial tenant twenty-five and one sixth years. How do these terms compare with the state of things under the Purchase Acts already in operation, under which there are 80,000 men paying annual instalments? They involve an enormous increase. The number of years purchase under the present Acts show, I believe, an average of seventeen years purchase; that is to say, the standard determined by the Land Court as fair to the tenant and safe for the taxpayer may have a wide range of fluctuation, but the average is seventeen years. The disparity is further aggravated when we remember that in cases under the existing Acts the purchaser acquires the fee simple of the property, whereas under this new proposal the purchaser only acquires seven eighths. Therefore, are we to understand that it is expected that the tenants should pay, and that the public Exchequer should advance many millions for a rent which is not there, which is not in the ground? They are paying on a basis, these new purchasers, as it seems to me, of a vanished rent, an imaginary rent, and, of course, we know they are not millionaires able to pay fancy prices. As we all know, sales of agricultural property have not been lively in England and Scotland of late years, but as far as they have gone they have been at about eighteen years purchase. But, as the Prime Minister has pointed out, that is eighteen years purchase of the land with all that the landlord has put into it. How does that compare with twenty-two years and even twenty-five years purchase of land into which the landlord has never put anything? Now, I have some figures which I think bring out these facts very clearly. I take them from the *Freeman's Journal*, and I think we know enough of the *Freeman's Journal* and those who conduct it to be sure that they are accurately stated. I have certainly not seen these figures challenged in any quarter, and they bring out more forcibly than any other method the vast difference between the payments that will have to be made by the new purchasers and those made by purchasers under the old Acts. I take three cases of £100 of rent. I do not mean the same £100 rented farm at the two epochs, but, as it were, three classes of people paying £100 worth of rent under whatever law or bargain it may be. Those who pay under the present system have to give seventeen years purchase—that is to say, £1,700 is paid to the landlord—and the length of the term of repayment is forty-two and a half years, the gross total of their annual payments when they have become actual proprietors of their farms being £2,895. Now, a first-term tenant who has had no reduction of his rent for the second term has to pay under the Bill twenty-two years purchase. Therefore he has to pay £2,200 to his landlord. He goes on paying for sixty-eight and a half years, and by the end of that time will have paid £4,795, as against the first man's £2,890. The third man, the second-term tenant, a class which also includes the non-judicial tenant, has to pay twenty-five and one-sixth years purchase. His landlord receives over £2,500 and the tenant's payments extend over a period of sixty-eight and a half years, and the sum of his payments is £5,480; so that, if these figures are correct——

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (South Tyrone): They are not.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: Well, they may be capable of alteration slightly, but they are correct in the main. They are exclusive of the landlord's bonus, and they deal merely with the question of the relations between the tenant and the landlord; and you have the startling contrast between the £2,890, the payment under the present system, and £5,480 paid by the second-term tenant. I have read pretty closely all that has passed, but I have not seen any correction of these figures. I hope there is an explanation of them, because, as they stand, they mean that the conditions proposed are altogether absurd and preposterous. But, short of that, I still doubt whether they are not oppressive. At all events, I think they should be explained. If they could be justified they would alter the opinion the strongest advocates have of the arrangements. What I wish to point out is that the question of the terms imposed on the tenant is really the crucial question, not merely from the point of view of the tenant, but also from that of the taxpayer whose money is to be taken. There are one or two other smaller points to which I should like to refer. One has reference to the non-judicial tenant. They are to be treated as second-term tenants, the assumption being that as they have not gone into Court, their rents are fair. But I should imagine there are many in that position who have not gone into Court because they could not afford it. Therefore I wonder whether it is quite fair that those who have had no reduction at all, and the judicial tenants who may have had their rents reduced twice over, should be placed in the same category. Again I would ask what is the necessity of introducing first-term rents at all. I do not appreciate that point. I believe the Dunraven Conference recommended they should be left out of account. The present fair rents would seem to be the proper basis. If you start from any other basis you seem to make a false start, because the second-term tenant is no better off to-day than he was fifteen years ago as a first-term tenant. Circumstances are assumed to have altered since the first valuation, and, therefore, I do not see why you should refuse to take the second-term tenants' figures as applicable. Let us surely start fair. We are beginning a new partnership between the British taxpayer and the Irish tenant, and it is undesirable, as our interests are identical, to fix anything approaching to a fancy price, which would be too onerous to him and at the same time dangerous to the taxpayer.

Using the word dangerous, I come to another point, which I think is surely deserving of some attention. For seventy years the British Treasury is to be practically the landlord of Ireland, and the collector of rents in Ireland. What does this mean? It means that in any accident, any default, or in the face of a discovery after some years that the terms are more irksome than they seem to-day, it will fall to the Imperial Exchequer to enforce the payment of the instalments. It means seizure, it means eviction, it means foreclosure. Is that a pleasant or attractive picture of the work which is to be done in the future in the name of the British Treasury? I have not in my mind so much the fear of loss of money as the fear of being brought into the position of friction and conflict with the people in any respect. The Chief Secretary, no doubt, places a guard against that, as he thinks, by saying that he can lay an embargo upon money which goes in aid of local purposes. I doubt very much whether that can be done directly, county by county at all events, because it would be a strange thing to leave lunatics untended, or to allow roads to go to ruin because of this money payment not having been made. Let me contrast the proposal made in the Bill that is so often referred to, that of 1886. In the Bill of 1886 the terms were better in all respects. The number of years purchase chargeable to the tenant was sixteen, instead of twenty-two or twenty-five, and then the great point was, that an Irish State authority was created which not only collected the annual money, but retained it, and made a profit out of it, so that everybody was enlisted on the side of regular payment. Let us consider the two cases. First of all the case without an authority, that is to say, the case of the Bill. Advances are then made to several hundreds of thousands of individual tenants. There is rent collected from each one of them for seventy years. There is a liability to evict if they fail to pay. There is disorganisation of the finances and local government if grants-in-aid are abruptly cancelled. If, on the other hand, you had an authority of this kind, which, in my opinion, you ought to have, the advances would be made to one body, no responsibility would fall upon the British Treasury to collect the instalments, there would be no friction or collision, there would be absolute security by leaving the instalments in the hands of the authority in lieu of the grants-in-aid, and there would be the identification of Ireland with the administration of the whole scheme, and further, there would be an opportunity for this local authority to assist the poorer classes of tenants, and enable them to do better justice to the land than they can now.

There are many subordinate points of a technical kind which one could refer to, but these have been dealt with with much energy and force by the hon. Member for Waterford. I wish to concentrate my criticisms on the two principal and vital matters to which I have referred. First of all the equity, and therefore the security—because the security depends upon the equity—of the burden laid upon the tenant. And secondly, the policy, so often denounced by eminent members of the Party opposite, of leaving the British Treasury face to face, as rent collectors, with the whole peasantry of Ireland. The whole future of the harmonious working of this scheme, and therefore the contentment of Ireland, depends upon the alterations which may be made in this Bill in Committee. Let it go into Committee that these may be effected, and it will only be when it emerges from that crucible that we shall be able to judge whether it will really attain the beneficent object which undoubtedly it has in view. I have said that, in the interests of peace in Ireland, the people of England and Scotland are willing to make great efforts and even sacrifices. I was rather surprised to see that this view was scornfully repudiated the other night by a well-known former Member of this House, one of the most high-minded and patriotic of Irishmen, Mr. Horace Plunkett. He said—

> "this great measure ought not to be regarded as a measure for the purpose of purchasing peace in Ireland. If that is the attitude of Englishmen towards the Irish question it will be an attitude undignified for England and demoralising to Ireland."

I differ entirely from Mr. Plunkett. I hold that blessed in any case are the peacemakers. But it is not only peace that we seek, but the development and the prosperity of Ireland, and there is no lack of desire to see her enjoying prosperity as well as peace. What is lacking at this stage of this Bill is the certainty that we require—the confidence—that its scheme as it now stands will achieve its alleged object.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The right hon. Gentleman has recalled the debate to the Bill itself. I came here prepared to discuss the Bill, and found it in great danger of being switched on to a discussion of the policy of Land Purchase. I thought that had been settled for all time long ago. When this Bill was first introduced by the right hon. Gentleman, I said, speaking with reserve as to details, that it was, in my opinion, "a great, far-reaching, and epoch-making measure." Since then, having devoted both time and attention to its study, having listened to hostile criticism in Ireland, and weighed what can fairly be said against some of its provisions, I see no reason to change the general attitude I then took up. I support the Second Reading—not because I like many of the complicated arrangements of the Bill—because I do not. I think some of them far inferior to Land purchase law as it exists at present. I support the Bill heartily at this stage because it represents to my mind the passing of Irish landlordism, the beginning of the end of as tragic a story as the history of any civilised country presents. The Bill does three great things for which men of all parties in Ireland ought, in my opinion, to speak well of its authors. We have had Land Purchase Bills before. But this is the first time a responsible Government has ever frankly contemplated and provided for the entire abolition of dual ownership in the soil of Ireland. We have had the use of Imperial credit before now in connection with these measures. This is the first time a responsible Government has deliberately calculated the amount of the rental of Irish land, and proposed facilities, involving £100,000,000 sterling, for redeeming it. We have frequently in Ireland discussed proposals by which the State might bridge the gap between what the tenant could safely pay, and the sum which the landlord, under all the circumstances, could reasonably accept. This is the first time the proposal of a State bonus or grant-in-aid has been submitted to Parliament by a Minister of the Crown. And, because it does these three things, frankly and unequivocally, I have commended the Bill to my friends in Ulster, some of whom were, and are, disposed to overlook the good that it seeks to do in their anxiety regarding some of its undoubted shortcomings. But, fortunately, as things stand, all Ireland is practically for the Second Reading. The after stages of the Bill will be much more serious. If the right hon. Gentleman has and keeps an open mind, if he is prepared to take a reasonable view of Amendments—necessary, in some cases, to protect and secure the State as well as the tenant—all will be well. If, on the other hand, he proposes to force the Bill through practically without Amendment, then the fair promise of to-day will disappear, and future trouble is all but certain to arise.

The friendly criticism, which I propose to offer at this stage can be grouped under two or three clearly-defined heads. I propose to deal with: first, the finance of the Bill, so far as it affects the price to be paid by the tenant, and the amount the landlord is to receive; second, I propose to dissent from the policy of the Bill, in so far as it puts pressure upon tenants to buy that is not equally applied to landlords to sell; third, I propose to dissent from the change of policy involved in the denial of the freehold to purchasers; and lastly, I propose to offer some criticism upon the portions of the Bill dealing with the labourers and the revision of the Land Law. I hope to be able to confine what I have to say within reasonable limits, and also to make my position clear even to hon. Members who are not familiar with the Irish Land Acts.

First, then, as to finance. Speaking in October last to a meeting of tenants in County Down, I stated what, in my opinion, were the main essentials of any scheme for the satisfactory settlement of the land question. I said—

> "(*a*) That it should provide fair terms of purchase for the tenant, who in purchasing must take, in the future, the whole of the risks of Irish agriculture, whatever these may be. (*b*) That it should secure, so far as it is possible to do so, an equivalent to the landlord of the second term rents now being declared as fair rents by the Land Commission. (*c*) That it should not unduly tax the Imperial Exchequer. (*d*) That it should be a complete and final settlement of the question."

In my judgment, and tested by this standard, the Bill goes too far—not in seeking to give the landlord a full price for his land—he is entitled to that—but in seeking to inflate the security which he is to receive in exchange for the land. Take Clause 1. It is a very difficult clause for any one not intimately acquainted with the Irish Land Question. But when it is mastered it proposes to do this. First-term rents—*i.e.*, rents that have been reduced by the Courts 20 per cent.—may be bought and sold upon terms that will reduce the terminable annuity below the rent by not less than 20 and not more than 40 per cent. In the case of second-term rents—*i.e.*, those rents that have been reduced by the Courts 38 per cent.—may be bought and sold upon terms that will reduce the terminable annuity below the rent by 10 and not more than 30 per cent. This means—and the Irish farmer well understood—that first-term rents may be sold at from nineteen to twenty-five years purchase, and second-term rents at from twenty-two to twenty-eight years purchase. I say at once that the first effect of these proposals is to strike people in Ireland dumb. During the seventeen years of the working of Irish Land Purchase Acts, the price paid for the land has been something under eighteen years purchase of first-term rents. The tenant now asks, and naturally enough, why this extraordinary boom in the price? And he will not readily purchase at any such price.

Now there are several things to be borne in mind here by all those who desire to see a fair settlement arrived at. There is very little use in talking now about land being bought at seventeen or eighteen years purchase of the rent, and for this all-sufficient reason—that there is no more land to be sold at that price. Two classes of landlords have sold at this price in the past—those who were practically bankrupt, who were compelled by circumstances to sell and could not help it; and those who desired to get out of the country at any price, and who could afford to sell at a loss. Practically these two classes represent the sales of land that have taken place since 1885. It cannot be denied by anyone who knows Ireland that these two classes are all but exhausted. No body will now sell at this figure. There is another thing we must bear in mind, and it is, that this extraordinary demand for land has naturally tended to raise the price. Tenants have been keen to buy because the whole country has been breast high for compulsory sale, and of course the landlords have taken advantage to raise the price. This is the play of the natural economic law. We are face to face with the fact that land is not for sale in any large quantities at seventeen or eighteen years' purchase, and we must face the fact that if it were there would be no need for this Bill. There is plenty of credit standing in the Land Commission books, and I believe it amounts to something like £25,000,000 sterling, and if land could be had at seventeen or eighteen years' purchase in abundance this Bill need never have been introduced. It is on this point the right hon. Gentleman has overdone his proposals. Let the House bear in mind that these tremendous operations under this Bill are to be carried through by State aid, and at the entire risk of the State. The State is to guarantee at least £100,000,000 sterling to establish single ownership in the land.

Bearing this in mind let us see what the Bill does. We all desire on both sides of the House that the landlord should get out of his unfortunate position without loss of income. From first to last this has been my own desire, and it is now admitted to be everybody's aim. Pray bear in mind that the Bill as it stands actually contemplates a possible sale at twenty-eight years' purchase of the second-term rents, *plus* a bonus to the landlord of from 5 to 15 per cent. on the purchase money. The best way to show how ruinous this is to the tenant, and how extremely risky it is to the State, is to show by an accurate but simple calculation what a lower price than that will do. I take, by way of illustration, a second-term rent of £100. Let us suppose the tenant is willing to pay, not twenty-eight years' purchase, because you will get no tenant to pay that; but let us suppose that he is willing to pay twenty-three years' purchase. This means a capital sum of £2,300. Let the House remember that the landlord does not get this sum in depreciated stock as now, but he is going to get it under this Bill in coin of the realm. What is he to do with it when he gets it? This is the real difficulty of the entire situation. Probably three-fifths of Irish properties are under the Settled Land Acts, and the purchase money represented in this case must be invested in trustee securities. Sections 46 and 47 of the Bill clearly contemplated this difficulty, because they propose to widen and extend the investing powers of trustees; but however this may be, the Irish landlord, I maintain, by electing to take a 3½ per cent. investment for the purchase money, must vastly improve his present security. The most risky of such securities is safer than Irish land. And invested at 3½, his annual income from the capital sum would be £80 10s. 0d. The bonus or grant-in-aid on the capital sum taken at 10 per cent.—the mean between 5 and 15—would amount to £230. This is not part of the settled estate, and invested at 4 per cent. would produce £9 6s. 0d. per annum. The annual income accruing from the investment of the capital sum at 3½ per cent., and the bonus at 4 per cent., would therefore be £89 16s. 0d., or, roughly speaking, £90 in place of the £100 second-term rent. But if, as the landlords agree, 10 per cent. be taken off income for management expenses—and this amount by no means represents the outgoings on an ordinary estate—we get at a result which exactly supplies the equivalent for the second-term rent. We get £90 from invested capital against £90 of net income from rent. Why should the landlord get more? Why should the Government propose to give him more? Why should the Government suggest by these extraordinary limits that he ought to get more? I know the reply that will be made here. The calculation is accurate. It will stand against any amount of criticism. But the landlord insists upon getting a 3 per cent. investment. He desires a gilt-edged security for the ragged title deeds of Irish Land. And he will say further that the Land Conference of which I was a Member recommended that he should get it. I admit that it is all perfectly true. But, speaking for myself, at least, and I think for my three colleagues in this House, we made the recommendation in question on the assumption of a State bonus of £20,000,000. The State bonus stands in the Bill at £12,000,000. Let the House not misunderstand me. I am not complaining. I am not asking that it should at present be increased. But I am not willing to put a load on the tenant's back under which he must entirely break down and involve us all in disaster—in order that the landlord should get, not a fair price, but an inflated security. If there are to be sacrifices in this matter—and there must be—these must be mutual. If the State can go no further, if the tenant, by paying twenty-three years' purchase, has gone the length that is safe—surely the landlord may reasonably be asked to forego a first class security for that which is, perhaps, the most questionable security in the country.

But I must now ask the House to lift the curtain a little bit further as regards the landlord's position under the Bill. He will get first of all the full economic value of the land, and perhaps more, from the tenant. He will also get £12,000,000 of a free grant from the State in excess of value. Is this all? By no means. Right through the Bill in Sub-section after Sub-section there is a submerged bonus—all of it flowing straight in the same direction. Take the costs of transfer. The whole of these costs, or the main portion, will be borne by the State. This is an enormous bonus in itself, and when the work is completed it will probably represent two or three million pounds sterling. Take next the provision for the sale of demesne lands. A landlord, having sold his tenanted land, may sell his demesne to the Land Commission, buy it back, and pay the money, up to £20,000, in sixty-eight and a half years. He will thus have money at 2¾ per cent. to repay interest on mortgages at 4½ and 5 per cent. This is another submerged bonus. Take again the encumbered landlord—and most of the Irish landlords are in this position. I know an estate where the gross income is £2,000—the net is £500, owing to heavy interest on all kinds of incumbrances. The mere relief of getting rid of this heavy interest will be in all such cases a bonus in itself. I calculate that on this special estate the net income of the landlord instead of being £500, as now, will be £750, by merely getting rid of the high interest. Again, within the last five years, the landlord has been freed from the half of the poor rate which he formerly paid. He has, within the same period, got £1,000,000 in the matter of tithe rent charge. And, putting all these items together, I say he leaves the battlefield not beaten and disgraced, not plundered or robbed, but with all the honours of war, his "basket full of all manner of store." He loses nothing—he gains heavily by this bloodless revolution. I do not complain. I do not denounce this measure as a landlords' relief Bill. I have advised all over whom I have influence that it is worth their while to pay something for the relief which this Bill aims at giving. I have said in my place here that, for the State, agrarian peace in Ireland is worth untold millions to the Empire. But whilst it is right under existing circumstances that these gentlemen should receive just and even generous treatment, they have no right to escape laden with the spoils of war, no right to burden the tenant and leave a legacy of future trouble for the State. And I say now that twenty-three years' purchase of the second and nineteen years of the first-term rents from the tenant is a sufficient maximum to meet all the necessities of the case. It is as much as it is safe to place on the tenant's back. As a matter of simple fact the maximum under the Bill is a little over twenty-eight years of the second-term, and twenty-five of the first-term. Tenants will not and ought not to give these prices. The State would incur the gravest peril were they to do so, and as such prices are not required to secure the landlord a full equivalent for his rent, I trust the Bill will be altered in this respect and that no such dangerous standard will be set up. The same alteration is necessary in Clause 1. I am afraid this is a very technical part of my criticism, but the amendment is necessary to secure the successful and safe working of the Bill. The limits in both zones as to the minimum reductions ought to be widened from ten to at least fifteen in the case of second-term rents, and from twenty to at least twenty-five in the case of first-terms. This is a matter in which the State has a vital interest. If the limit stands at ten and twenty, as in the Bill, it may well turn out that land may change hands and a State advance be made for which no real or adequate security exists. Let it be borne in mind that all inspection of the land by skilled valuers, as in the past, is abolished. The entire safety of the State under Clause 1 depends upon the limit of reduction being sufficient.

The past history of land purchase proves that tenants will, in many cases, give more than they ought to give for the land. Applications for loans, amounting to £70,000, have been rejected upon this very ground last year. And when I tell the House that since the Act commenced applications for something like a million sterling have been rejected by the Land Commission, because the landlords and the tenants agreed to a price for which there was no security in the land, it will be seen that the whole safety of the State, apart from that of the tenant, depends upon the margin not being cut so fine as in the Bill. My contention, on the other hand, is that the limits at the other end of the zone, which establish a maximum reduction, and by so doing enforce a minimum price, ought to be altogether removed. In whose interests are these limits set up? The State proposes that the landlord shall not sell to a tenant unless upon certain conditions. The terms must be 10 per cent. under the second-term and 20 per cent. under the first-term rent. But they must not be more than 30 or 40 per cent. less. I would like at least an intelligent answer to the question of why this limit stands in the Bill. In whose interest is this limit enforced? Not, surely, in the interest of the State. The lower the price the greater the security of the State. Not, certainly, in the interest of the tenant. His interests are all against the fixing of a minimum price—all in the direction of the play of a free market. The limit is clearly in favour of the landlord. And why should this extraordinary weapon be used in his behalf? Is he incapable of protecting his own interests? He is not compelled to sell. Why should he be legally restrained in arriving at terms with his tenants? Why should the owner of an agricultural slum—and there are agricultural slums in Ireland—be cribbed, cabined, and confined within these limits? I may be told that the judicial rent having been fixed, the slum ought to be subject to the same purchase terms as other land. But that takes a good deal for granted in regard to judicial rents and much more than Irish Members generally will be prepared to concede. The truth is, this minimum limit is indefensible. The State has no right to fix a minimum price. Its primary, if not its sole duty is to secure the safety of the taxpayer. It has no right to inflate the price in the interest of the landlord, and by so doing to imperil the State and unduly burden the tenant.

Up to this point I have been dealing with judicial tenants. But there are, perhaps, close upon 100,000 tenants who either have not gone into the Land Court, or who have been legally barred from doing so. These tenants can purchase under the present Acts, and it is not proposed to debar them from participating in the benefits of this Bill. How are these people treated under Clause 1? They may be taken all round as the most rack-rented tenants in the country. Their unrevised rack rents are treated, for the purpose of sale, under the Bill as "the existing rent." In thousands of these cases annual abatements have been made by landlords. The rents were too much for the landlords even, and without any pressure they have made annual abatements. No account is taken of these. All such tenants are dealt with on the basis of "the existing rent." Talk of bonuses! If we take the difference between the judicial rents and these rents, it will be found to amount to something between 30 and 40 per cent. By adhering to the Bill in these 100,000 cases we give the landlord an additional bonus to this extent. This is not just. It is not equitable. And those people, deprived of a fair rent in the past, ought not to be further penalised. These rents ought to be reduced for the purpose of purchase—they ought to be dealt with as a separate class, and the terms of purchase ought to be based upon the fact that these are rack rents. All such rents ought to be placed in a special Subsection with a minimum reduction of at least 33 per cent. I have still another point on finance before I pass to the other parts of the Bill. I desire now to draw the attention of the House to the method of repayment under this Bill. The authors of the measure appear to have been content to secure the landlord a lavish equivalent for his income, and, at the same time, by spreading the repayment over a long period, to assure the tenant a reduction in his annual rent. I do not complain of the working principle embodied in these two propositions. But I do complain of the manner in which it has been worked out. The landlord gets out of the imbroglio, as I have shown, with drums beating and banners waving. But how does the tenant fare? And pray let the House remember, what should never in these discussions be forgotten, that the interest of the State is bound up with fair terms to the tenant. If he is oppressed the State must suffer. The advance to him is made upon terms that are, it may at once be conceded, generous. He gets the whole of the purchase money at 2¾ per cent. And as the operation is calculated upon a 3¼ annuity the redemption period is sixty-eight-and-a-half years, and the Sinking Fund is ten shillings, or ½ per cent. This is one of the things in the Bill to which the more thoughtful amongst the Ulster farmers strongly object. What the Bill really does is to ensure a reduction on the annual payments by spreading these over a very long period of time. We talk of Sinking Funds to people who do not really know what the phrase covers. In this case the Sinking Fund is the tenant's own money—the money which he pays annually to redeem the loan. All the rest of his payment is interest on the advance—and interest, I admit, at a most advantageous rate. Why has the Sinking Fund been reduced in this Bill to 10s.? In the Ashbourne Acts it was, I think, 17s. 6d. In the Acts of 1891 and 1896 it was £1. The higher the Sinking Fund the sooner the tenant is clear of his liability. The lower it is the longer he goes on paying—and paying interest as well as capital. I again ask—Why has the Sinking Fund been lowered to 10s. in this Bill? It is not, of course, to deceive people. That is impossible, because nobody capable of thinking can be deceived. It has been lowered because the whole financial plan of the Bill demanded it. You could not have your results without doing so. And I maintain that by this procedure the Bill will impose a burden upon the tenant, and place the State in some uncertainty if not in actual peril. By the Ashbourne Act of 1885 everything was plain sailing. The tenant redeemed his loan by a 4 per cent. annuity in forty-nine years. In this case the Sinking Fund was 17s. 6d. No vital alteration was made by the Act of 1891, when this House voted credit to the extent of £33,000,000 for this purpose. The Act of 1896, however, did introduce a great change. It first established the principle of decadal reductions. The period of repayment was lengthened from forty-nine to seventy-three years. Stock was to be taken at the close of the first, second, and third decennial periods. Interest was only to be charged on outstanding capital, and, as a result, the reduction on the first decade amounted to 10 per cent. and two further reductions will follow in twenty years. This Bill abolishes this plan, although nearly the whole of the purchasers had elected to accept it. The plan had to be abolished. It could not be carried out with a Sinking Fund of 10s. And I ask the House to consider well this important change. We are carrying out a great revolution. Those of us who know most about Ireland are full of hope. We believe in the magic power of ownership. We believe the land will produce far more in the future than it has produced in the past. We believe that peace will pay everybody concerned better than turmoil. But it is a far cry to Loch Awe. No one can venture to say what the state of agriculture may be thirty, forty, or fifty years hence. A man may now start paying his annuity full of hope. His successor, under different circumstances, may stagger under it, may fall, and then we shall all wish we had never been born. It is on this ground I lament the abolition of the decadal reductions. They were a great encouragement to the tenant. They were a real security to the State. A man will go on amidst difficulties with relief in front. He may go down with no hope of relief. Alike, then, in the interest of the State and the tenant, I ask for the re-consideration of this matter. The Irish tenant will pay a little more cheerfully now—if he can look forward to reductions in the future. This change in the framework of the Bill will cost the State nothing. It will be, in reality, a policy of insurance against future loss. I plead for an increase in the Sinking Fund and the maintenance of the decadal system of reductions.

To sum up on finance, I say that, first, the Bill goes too far in relief of the landlord by seeking in reality to give him a 3 per cent. security—in exchange for that which is not equal to 4 per cent. in the market; second, it does this by fixing a minimum price for the land—and by seeking to secure terms that are at once burdensome, if not impossible, for the tenant, and risky, if not absolutely dangerous, for the State; third, the landlord can get out with perfect safety on receiving a maximum price from the tenant of twenty-three years' purchase of second and of nineteen on first-term rents—which, *plus* the State bonus, means twenty-two and twenty-six years' purchase. Anything more is dangerous alike for the tenant and the taxpayer; fourth, the financial arrangements ought to be so re-cast as to permit of the system of decadal reductions being maintained, alike in the interest of the State and the tenant purchaser.

I come now to another vital part of the Bill, viz., the interference which it proposes to sanction with the tenant's rights under the Act of 1881. The right hon. Gentleman apparently carries the Act of 1881 on his brain. He never makes a speech in England without denouncing it. Lately he declared before some audience, more or less ignorant of the question, that by the Act of 1881 Mr. Gladstone gave Ireland litigation instead of justice. This is one of those half truths that avoid a good deal. Let me state this undoubted fact in another way. The Act of 1881 gave to the Irish tenant the right to recover for his own use the property which had been stolen from him for centuries. The Act of 1881 assessed and valued the respective interests of landlord and tenant in the land, and so made a Purchase Bill such as this possible. The Act of 1881 just enabled England to hold Ireland, and no more. This is the real truth about the Act of 1881. And I speak the mind of every holder of land in Ireland when I say that we do not mean to allow that Act to be vitally touched or interfered with until occupying ownership is an established fact. Let me show the House what the Bill proposes to do in this respect. By Clause 5 any landowner desirous of selling his estate can call in the aid of the Land Commission. The Commission thereupon makes all inquiries—thus saving him the trouble of negotiation with the occupiers. It names the price. The landlord is not compelled to accept this price. But, if he does, and three-fourths of the tenants agree to buy, a recalcitrant fourth, who then become the tenants of the Land Commission, are thereupon deprived of all right to enter the Land Court to have their rents revised. Now I do not say that a minority of tenants ought to be able to prevent, or even to endanger, the purchase of an estate. Nothing of the kind. But why is there not mutuality of treatment between the two parties? The tenants—or a minority of them—refuse to purchase on the terms named by the Land Commission. They are forthwith penalised. But the landlord, after setting the Commission in motion, and putting the country to the cost of inspection, is quite at liberty to refuse the terms. He need not sell. He is not penalised in any way. He is not even asked to pay the costs. If compulsion is to be used against the tenants who refuse to accept the Land Commission terms, why is it not used against the landlord who may be guilty of precisely the same conduct? Here you penalise the tenant. There you allow the landlord the exercise of his free and unfettered discretion. Things are even worse—for you allow in certain cases Sub-section B Clause 17 a bare majority to compel or penalise a minority—and you allow the land Judge, of all men in the world, to suspend the Act of 1881 at his will and pleasure. If I am told that such provisions are necessary because in all such cases the Land Commission would be the landlord and could not therefore fix the fair rent of such holdings, several answers may be made. The County Court Judge is, under the Act of 1881, a rent-fixing authority, and all such cases might be dealt with in that Court, or, following the precedents of the 40th Section of the Act of 1896, you might treat these tenants as purchasers. Or, better still, you could treat the consenting tenants as the estate, and leave the not contents as tenants of the landlord. The right hon. Gentleman as a thorough-going opponent of compulsion applied to the landlord to sell. He does not object, however, to compel tenants to buy. Well, I say here from my place that we shall resist and fight against all these attacks, covert and above-board, on the Act of 1881. The real strength of the tenant's position lies in the fact that all these rents are liable to revision eight and ten years hence. If we cannot secure legal and direct compulsion in this House, we shall certainly not give away that form of indirect compulsion which the third fixing of the judicial rents secures to us. This is a matter which no tenant's representative can palter with. It admits of no compromise.

I now come to deal with that which is a new departure in land purchase—the denial of the freehold to the purchaser. Whatever may be said on this head, it cannot be denied that the proposal to make one-eighth of the advance irredeemable is a novelty. The 80,000 men who have already bought are freeholders. And I dare to say that it is this very sense of ownership which has been at the root of all the success that has attended the experiment. What does the Bill propose in this respect? Take a holding the second-term rent of which is £100. It is bought at a reduction of say 10 per cent., viz. £90. The tenant goes on paying £90 for sixty-eight and a half years, and for ever after a rent charge of £11 5s. This is not ownership. This perpetual rent charge establishes a new form of landlordism—that of the Crown. There is no doubt much to be said for the principle of land nationalisation. I have sat under the spell of Mr. Henry George; his was an attractive and an alluring policy. And, given a new country to begin with, I should unhesitatingly adopt the principle of nationalisation of the land, and probably of a good deal else beside. But Ireland is not a new country. You cannot put new wine into old bottles, or they will break. You cannot mend an old garment with new cloth. You must do the best you can under all the circumstances of the case that is to be dealt with, and Ireland with 500,000 tenant occupiers is not an inviting bit of ground on which to start the theory of land nationalisation I object to this provision and this new policy because (a) it perpetuates and does not abolish landlordism, (b) it destroys the sense of ownership upon which we mainly rely for success, (c) because no cause has been shown for such a radical change in policy. I am aware that it has been held to be necessary for the State to maintain control, after the loan has been repaid, over reckless mortgaging, subdividing, and sub-letting of the land. I entirely agree. At the Land Conference I contended for this principle against some of my colleagues. But this control can be secured by a nominal quit rent as effectively as by a policy which, in my judgment, would destroy to a large extent the incentive to exertion which the Land Purchase Acts contain. I trust, therefore, that the reservation of one-eighth will not be persisted in.

I have not aimed at any detailed examination of the Bill. That would be an impossibility in a speech on the Second Reading. I have tried to indicate points of crucial importance upon which much will have to be said in Committee. And before I sit down I desire to ask for information upon some points that are either not clear in the Bill or are not dealt with. In the first place, I desire to ask whether it is proposed that all holdings such as residential holdings and town parks, which can be purchased under the present Acts, should be under no disability in the new Act? Secondly, is it intended to maintain the limit of advance set up in the Land Purchase Act of 1888—a limit avowedly fixed owing to the advance for the purpose of land purchase being limited in amount? Thirdly, I wish to know whether it is proposed to make any arrangements for the redemption of drainage charges?

There are, however, two points I have not dealt with—the labourers and the Land Law. I corroborate the remark of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, that the Labourers Clauses are perfectly grotesque as a settlement of the question. The labourers do not require new legislation in principle. They require the present Acts to be made workable and effective. Parliament has clothed local authorities in Ireland with adequate powers. These authorities do not always show a disposition to exercise these powers. The labourer requires a decent sanitary house with a plot of ground. Before he can get this he has to go through inquiries before the District and County Councils, the Local Government Board, and finally before the Privy Council. The Acts are therefore strangled by the machinery. This is the evil to be dealt with—and as a remedy for this evil the clauses in the Bill are perfectly useless. During the recent South Antrim Election the right hon. Gentleman sent down his private secretary to announce to the labourers of that constituency, in his name, that the Government intended to drain the Bann and bring in a Labourers' Bill. The floods have not yet subsided in the neighbourhood of the Bann, and the Labourers' Bill, I suppose, is embodied in these three clauses that will do little or nothing to solve a difficult and urgent problem — the housing of the poorest class in Ireland. I have no right to give the right hon. Gentleman advice, but I say frankly that the labourers will not look at these clauses. He will be well advised to withdraw these clauses, and face the problem on the lines of the Labourers' Acts rather than in this Bill.

Then one word on the Land Law. As regards the Land Law portion of the Bill, I am not disposed seriously to cavil at it. I agree that if money is to be spent largely on land purchase the Government has a right to save it in other directions. And I confess that I shall not be sorry when the army of temporary sub-commissioners, legal and lay, is disbanded. The whole system of temporary employment in fixing rents is indefensible. These men, in the main, are invertebrates who simply follow the lead of the Chief Commissioners—a body of men who are utterly ignorant of the value of land. But I do make objection to one proposal. In Clause 80 there is a provision that an application to fix a fair rent, where the rent does not exceed £5, may be decided on the report of one sub-commissioner, and that an appeal shall only lie upon three grounds: First, that the man has no right to get a rent fixed; secondly, that the order is bad on the face of it; and thirdly, that the rent has been varied more than 20 per cent. Mark the mutuality. The landlord can appeal if the variation is more than 20 per cent., but the tenant cannot appeal if he considers the reduction inadequate. All through the Bill there is this want of mutuality. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford referred to Mr. Wrench. I do not agree with a great deal that has been said about Mr. Wrench. There must be a landlord or a landlords' representative on the Commission. I have known Mr. Wrench for a very long time. He has a great knowledge of the Land Commission work; he is a man of the world, and is quite capable of taking a broad view of things if he has to do it, and I have no doubt when he is not working with Mr. Justice Meredith and Mr. Fitzgerald large views may present themselves. But I wish to state most distinctly that while I raise no objection to Mr. Wrench holding this position, I do raise objection to his remaining a member of the Congested Districts Board. He has enough to do without troubling the Congested Districts Board. There must be one member of the Land Commission on the Congested Districts Board, and as you have so effectually isolated Mr. Murrough O'Brien, you might as well give him that position. I may as well say right out that Clause 76 (4) will be strongly resisted by myself and others. Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald, tested by his merits, has already received at the hands of the State far more than he deserved. He never had the slightest practice at the Irish Bar. In the early days of the Act of 1881 he was literally hunted out of Armagh and Tyrone as an Assistant Legal Commissioner. By methods that are well-known he was pitchforked into the position he now holds. And in that position he has done as much as any of his colleagues to keep the land fire burning and Ireland in trouble. He and his have done very well out of the country—and the Government will in his case do well to let sleeping dogs lie.

I apologise to the House for the length at which I have trespassed upon its patience. But the Bill deals with a difficult and complicated question to which I have devoted my whole time and strength for years. I have been asked over and over again since this measure was introduced whether it would settle the question. I hope I am under no illusions—and I know that "settle" is a big word, representing a great deal, and it is upon this one thing that the whole question turns. But assuming one thing—that the right hon. Gentleman keeps an open mind in Committee—that the terms of sale and purchase come through that ordeal in a possible shape, fair to tenant and landlord alike—assuming this, I believe that seven-eighths of the Irish landlords will sell. The bonus, in my opinion, will prove irresistible. That there will be a remnant who will fight on I have no manner of doubt. There is not an Irish Member who could not name some of these men. But their position will be utterly untenable. And if the bonus could be limited in time and distributed uniformly, as the Land Conference recommended, a great impetus would be given to sale in all such cases. The right hon. Gentleman thinks he can accomplish this work without compulsion. I disagree with him. This Bill has been born of compulsion. But those of us who have been the strongest in demanding this solution of the question would incur a grave responsibility if we for a moment stood in the way of a Government carrying out a great scheme such as is embodied in this Bill. What I call the remnant can, and will be, dealt with in due season.

The last point I make has reference to the position of British Members in regard to this question. If I represented a British constituency, I should think very little of the bonus of £12,000,000; but I should think much and long over the advance of £100,000,000 required to carry out this great scheme. Many Members of this House have discussed this matter with me since the Bill was first introduced. And how does the case stand? There are two risks to be run—one real, the other more or less unreal, just as people look at it. I tell the House frankly that if it places an impossible burden upon the tenant, if it induces him to purchase upon impossible terms merely to enrich landlords, then a day of disaster will inevitably come. This is the real and certain risk. If Clause 1 is not amended the House will invite disaster. As to all talk of a general disike against payment—of a combination to enforce political aims by refusal to pay in the future, I treat this as an absolutely unreal risk. It is mere surmise — the mutterings of prophets who do not know Ireland, who do not know the Irish people. Behind you have the past twenty years, with its record of honest payments; in front you have your Guarantee Fund, out of which any loss can be instantly recouped. You have the passion for the land, which is the great governing fact in this question, and, above all, you have that blessed longing for peace and appeasement and reconciliation which distinguishes the Ireland of to-day from the Ireland of the past. You have landlord and tenant, leader and led, northern protestant and southern catholic, all at one - - all agreed as to this policy. There is not an atom of risk save and except that which this House could itself avoid, and alike in the interest of England and Ireland I support the Second Reading of this Bill, in the confident belief that, when reasonably amended, it opens up a new chapter in the relations of the two countries—so long united in name but separated in heart, feeling and aspiration.

*MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): This is a matter of interest to the taxpayers as well as to the landlords and tenants. I do not believe there is any great amount of risk to the British ratepayer in regard to the large loan that it is proposed to make to the tenants of Ireland under the Bill. I much prefer the system put forward by Mr. Gladstone's Bill in 1886. When the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House told us this afternoon that matters are very much changed, and seemed to argue that the security was as good as it would have been under Mr. Gladstone's Bill, I, for one, did not agree with him. It appears to me that under Mr. Gladstone's Bill you not only had the whole of the security you will get under this Bill, but you had the further security in the fact that an Irish authority collected the rents, and, further, the still more important fact that the whole of the Irish revenue would come into the hands of the Imperial Exchequer before the Irish could spend a single penny, and in case the money had not been paid by the Irish tenants we should distinctly have a lien on the whole of the Irish revenue, which you will not have under this Bill. While I am not afraid of the Irish tenants not paying the instalments in case we lend them all this money. I believe there is greater security under Mr. Gladstone's Bill and the system of an Irish authority. Every year the risk of Irish tenants giving up their holdings and refusing to pay their instalments grows less and less. But leaving the question of security for the £100,000,000, I should like to say a few words about the large amount of money we are proposing to give as a dole to the Irish landlords to induce them to sell under this Bill. £12,000,000 is a sum we cannot expect the British taxpayer to give without a thorough discussion and investigation of the details of this Bill, and it appears to me, looking from the point of view of the British taxpayer, it is a very large bribe to offer to the Irish landlords under the Bill. I am entirely in favour of the principle of land purchase, and of the principle of treating Irish landlords not only fairly but generously, but I think that under this Bill a great deal more than justice is going to be done.

And, it being half-past seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

IRISH LAND BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [4th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was,

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. ASHTON: The price to be given for this land compares very strangely with the price to be given in 1886 under Mr. Gladstone's Bill. Mr. Gladstone considered twenty years would be sufficient to satisfy the claims of Irish landowners. He took twenty years as his standard. Under the Bill no landlord was to get more than twenty-two years' purchase, and he gave it as his opinion that the average price would not be more than seventeen years' purchase of the rents. That opinion is strongly borne out by the facts, because we heard this afternoon, from the Leader of the Opposition, I think, that the average purchase price under the Land Acts has been almost exactly seventeen and a half years purchase. Well, Sir, that, compared from the British taxpayers' point of view, with the price to be given under this Bill is very much smaller. The price to be given under this Bill is more generous in two ways. In the first place it gives a bonus to the landlords, and in the second it gives a much larger number of years' purchase, the total result of the two combined being to give between twenty-five and thirty-three years' purchase on the present rental of the land. That is a very large order indeed, and I think it requires some justification at the hands of the Government when we know that land in Ireland under ordinary circumstances is sold at seventeen years' purchase, and when we know that agricultural land in this country will not sell without amenities at anything like that price. We are told we must give this large price in order to induce the landlords to sell. But if we are to give this bonus and these favourable terms we have a right to demand that the landowners shall be coerced into selling; if we are to give these terms we ought to be given the right of compulsory purchase, and I do not believe that this Bill will work satisfactorily unless it provides that this land shall be purchased compulsorily from the landowners. Unless it is made compulsory, I feel sure there will be a large number of landowners who will hold back in the hope that if they hold back long enough better terms will be offered to them. Why could we not have compulsion in this matter? We have compulsion now-a-days for the purchase of property for the public good; we have admitted on this side for years that where it is in the interest of the public that property should be taken it should be taken at a fair price and no more, and I am glad to notice that in the last year or two the Conservative Party has accepted this view.

In the session of last year this House thought it was desirable, in the interest of London that the water companies should be purchased, but what was the principle of purchase in that case? They took the companies' property by compulsory purchase, but they provided that no sum was to be given in compensation for compulsory purchase. Again, we have another Bill in the interests of London, under which it is proposed that the property of the dock and pier companies shall be taken, because it is believed it will be for the benefit of London, and there a fair price without compensation is to be given. If that is to be the way in which English property owners are to be treated, I fail to see why Irish owners should be put on an entirely different footing. Why is it right that English owners should have their property taken from them compulsorily, without any bonus being given, and on the other hand, Irish landowners, who are not even compelled to sell, should receive a bonus? I think that requires from the Government some explanation to the taxpayers. Some explanation should be given as to why Irish owners are to be put in a superior position to owners of property in this country. I have tried to see why this difference should be made, and I confess I have been driven to the conclusion that though you might get justice for the landowner and the tenant in Ireland and the taxpayers of this country in this House, when this Bill goes to the House of Lords you cannot get it through unless you give a good bribe to the landowners, and I look on this £12,000,000 as a bribe given to the House of Lords for passing this Bill; and I believe even though we waited till—I had almost said a more satisfactory Government — a Liberal Government was in power we should never be able to get such a Bill as this through the House of Lords without giving a bribe to the owners of land in Ireland. That is the price we have to pay for getting the Bills of the representatives of the people in this House confirmed by the House of Lords.

I turn now to another part of the Bill, the question of the Demesne Lands. Mr. Gladstone in his Bill of 1886, if I remember right, left the demesne lands entirely out of his Bill. I think he was right, but in this Bill we are giving the landowners power to sell their demesne land and then to buy it back again, and also allow the landowners to have the same benefits as are given to the tenants in the way of borrowing the purchase money. You are going to advance the landowner the money to buy back his own land in sixty-eight and a-half years, and I fail to see why the owners of demesne lands should be dealt with in this way. I would willingly sell £20,000 worth of land and then buy it again in sixty-eight and a-half years. I should get the money advanced from the Government at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. while I could invest in safe enough securities at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and at the end of the sixty-eight and a-half years I should still have the money for which I was receiving $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and my heirs would have the property free of all obligation. I fail to see why this advantage should be given to Irish landowners if it is not given to English, Scotch and Welsh owners in the same way. I approach this from the point of view of the British taxpayer, and I say, though we are willing to risk our money, we want to limit our risk as far as possible. I know it will be said that many of these lands are heavily encumbered, but my reply to that is, I regret to say, that in England a great many estates are also heavily encumbered. I do not see why these men should be risking their money to pay off encumbered estates in Ireland. The Government talk of a loan of £100,000,000, but I think that amount will probably be increased to £150,000,000. When Mr. Gladstone made his estimate of the cost of the land for the whole of Ireland he estimated that the amount required to be advanced would be £180,000,000. If it was £180,000,000 then, why should it be less now? I do not think even the Chief Secretary can argue that land has so fallen in value that it is now only worth £100,000,000.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): There have been two revisions of rent.

*MR. ASHTON: Yes, but that will not account for a difference of £80,000,000, and it is only some estates the rent of which have been revised twice.

MR. ATKINSON: And there have been a lot sold.

*MR. ASHTON: Now I pass from the demesne lands to the question of mortgaging these holdings. I am glad the Government are not going to allow these small holdings to be divided, but I am sorry to see they are going to allow the small holder to mortgage his holding. We all know that one of the greatest risks run is that of the small holder mortgaging his holding and falling into the hands of the moneylender. This is the case not only in Ireland but all over the world. We have a good example of it in the case of our Indian Empire, the Government of which is never free from trying to evolve some scheme to free the ryot. I should like to see in this Bill a provision that no mortgaging of small holdings should be allowed at all. Looking into the question of mortgage in India I find there a case where a few years ago, the Government had reclaimed some land by means of irrigation and that with respect to that they passed a law that none of that land should be mortgaged at all. That shows that, in the opinion of the officials of India, it is possible to keep these holdings free from mortgages. If it is felt that there ought to be some power of mortgage I feel it would be a more satisfactory condition of things to have some provision in the Act analogous to the American Homesteads Act, so as to prevent a small holder being sold up and cleared off his land. If we are going to spend £100,000,000 in Ireland it is of immense importance to us that the small holders should be satisfied with the arrangement, and if they are to be ejected from their holdings in time to come for mortgage debts it will be a very serious blot on this Act. Therefore I should like to see some such provision as that incorporated in the American Homesteads Act, which provides that the house and a certain number of acres round it, enough to provide for the holders, shall not be taken away from the occupants for debt. It may be said if the occupiers are not to mortgage their property they will not be able to raise money to carry on. I do not think that is so. They can raise money without mortgaging their land.

In the Native States of India the ryots cannot be ejected from their land, yet the moneylender is as willing to lend money in the Native States as in the British. Such a provision would get rid of a lot of rotten finance. In spite of what I may have said against this Bill I believe, in its present form, and still more if it had dealt more tenderly with the British taxpayers, it will not only be of enormous advantage to Ireland but to the Empire as a whole, and although I dislike very much some of its provisions I shall certainly vote for the Second Reading in the hope that something may be done in Committee to remedy its great defects. It will be of enormous advantage to the peasants of Ireland, who, under the hopes born of the Bill, will, I believe, turn into one of the most industrious sets of peasants in the world. When they feel that all they earn is going into their own pockets we may rest assured that industry will make Ireland a much happier and more prosperous country than she has been in the past. Another advantage that is going to be derived from the Bill is the discontinuance of the landowner as the British garrison. He has felt himself to be one of the British garrison and has placed himself in that position very largely for fear of what might happen to his land. Under this Bill he will take a very different position in Ireland to what he has taken in the past. We shall now, I think, find both working for the common good of Ireland. The landowner up to now has put his personal interest in his property first and his patriotism in the second place, but anyone who knows the Irish landowners knows, however that may be, that there is no one who is fonder of his country and more wishful for its good. I believe that there will be a large number of Irish landowners who, in the future, will take a personal interest in the affairs of their country because the tenants, having no longer any fear of them, will be willing to work with them, and the landlords will take their proper position just as the English landlords do in this country. In future it will not be so much a question of the land, but it will be a question of Progressives and Conservatives in Ireland, and many landlords will be found to join with the Nationalist

Members in their demand for the better Government of Ireland. Hitherto the landlords have supported the Dublin Castle system because they have looked upon it as the fortress of their land-owning rights, but when that system has disappeared the landlords of Ireland will be as anxious as hon. Gentlemen from Ireland to reform the Government of Ireland. But how are you going to get rid of "Castle" rule without setting up some large form of local government—I do not say Home Rule, which stinks in the nostrils of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but some system of government under which you will get the landowners of Ireland joining with the Nationalists for the better government of Ireland. When that time arrives it will be a happy day for Ireland and for Great Britain, as well as for the Empire at large.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: While I agree with much that has been said in this debate, many observations have been made with which I disagree. Compulsion upon the landlords to sell has been advocated, but if the State compels the landlord to sell it must also compel the tenants to buy, and these must be such terms as will be sound and fair to the State and the tenant. With regard to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition he took up his position, on the top of the purchase fence; on the one side of the fence was the ditch of compulsion and on the other the sound ground of voluntary purchase, and when the right hon. Gentleman concluded I could not tell on which side of the fence he was coming down. He said that the policy of the Bill altogether hung on the terms offered to the tenant, but that is not a fair way of putting it. What is more important is the terms which the landlord will accept. The principle of this Bill is voluntary purchase, and you can only carry out that policy by offering a sufficient inducement to both sides, inducement to the vendor to sell and to the purchaser to buy. Therefore, I cannot understand the position taken up by the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman also objects to a fixed rent over a long period. But how are you to carry out any system of State purchase but by a rent over a long period? That is an unfortunate remark, because it leaves us in a state of confusion and doubt. I think my interruption in the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was misunderstood. When he stated that the landlords of Ireland had agreed to compulsion being applied in the congested districts, I ventured to ask him his authority. I did not interrupt him unnecessarily and with the intention of laying a trap, as he appeared to think. In reply to my interruption the hon. and learned Member for Waterford read a statement made by Lord Dunraven's Committee which to the House seemed to settle the question against me. That Committee was got together by the spontaneous efforts of two or three men who sent out circulars. There are 10,000 or 12,000 landlords in Ireland, but these gentlemen only sent out voting papers to about 4,000. Of this total something over 1,100 voted for a conference, about 300 voted against it, and 2,500 never answered at all. I think those who did not vote must be regarded as mostly against the proposal, because it was popular to vote for and unpopular to vote against.

The hon. Member for Waterford has stated that the landlords have agreed to sale being made compulsory in the congested districts after five years. But the statement which the hon. Member read in proof of his point was made only by Lord Dunraven's Committee, and not by the Landowners' Convention. Passing to the Bill itself this measure is introduced under most extraordinary circumstances. Be it real, deep and lasting, or simulated and superficial, the fact remains that at the present moment the Irish landlord lion and the tenant lamb or *vice versa* seem more inclined to lie down in peace together than ever they have done before. I am obliged to trouble the House with some observations about myself personally. By every material and sentimental tie I am connected with Ireland; but, as the representative of an English constituency, I am bound to look on the Bill as it affects the general taxpayer. If I thought it was a bribe to Ireland to keep quiet or to give up Home Rule, I should not support it. If you once commence paying blackmail you will have to go on with it, and there has been too much tendency in the past to deal with Ireland in this way. The Act of 1881 was looked upon as a bribe to the many out of the pockets of the few. Under these circumstances it did not settle Ireland at all. That Act has had many effects. It failed to quiet the tenants and it has done more, for it has poisoned the social atmosphere of Ireland by the State fixing of rents at an artificial value, and in defiance of all economic laws; it has put a State premium upon deterioration of land and demoralised the people. In consequence of upsetting the economic conditons which exist in all other countries, the Act has had a most deplorable effect upon the artizan class in the rural districts. In the rural districts, carpenters, joiners, and every kind of skilled labourers have lost their employment in consequence, and they have fled to the large towns of this country to add to the congestion in Great Britain. As the Leader of the House stated to-day, the Act of 1881 and this State fixing of rent has made the position in Ireland intolerable. Therefore it has got to be remedied, and must be dealt with. Parliament, representing the people, in 1881 started Ireland on the road to ruin, and has brought her in twenty-one years to the edge of the abyss of economic perdition which is now visible to all thinking men. No one who knows the real facts can deny that Ireland must be rescued, and it is vital to the interests of the United Kingdom to do this. It is not a mere question of owners and occupiers, or a question of the interests of people of any particular class, but it is the interest of the whole body politic. It was Parliament which made that terrific blunder in 1881, and it is Parliament and the people of the United Kingdom in 1903 who must pay for that blunder. The Act of 1849 was founded upon the security of property in Ireland, and in consequence of that Act millions of British money have been invested in Ireland on the security of Irish land. This Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 had for its object the attraction of British capital to Ireland, and it succeeded because in those days there was a firm faith in the Parliamentary title and rights secured by law. But the Act of 1881 changed all that, and not only repelled more capital from Ireland but locked up the capital already there. Consequently, the landlords were placed between the devil and the deep sea. They had to meet the interest on the security, while there was a constant reduction and whittling down by the State of the value of the land and of the landlords means to pay. Looking at the matter from the point of view of my constituency and the British taxpayer, it is important, not merely to Ireland but to the general public, that some means should be found of releasing that capital and enabling it to be free without disastrous losses. For general reasons, and on behalf of the general taxpayer, I strongly support that principle of this Bill. We have now to consider the remedy. The wholesale repeal of the Act of 1881 is a matter beyond the region of practical politics. That would be another breach of faith on the part of Parliament, and would make confusion worse confounded. To amend the method of State revision, procedure is a necessary palliative, but it would be no cure. Now we come to the question of dual ownership. My hon. friend the Member for Islington dealt with that point, and he showed that this Bill could not abolish dual ownership. Every occupier of a house in London who pays a head rent is a dual owner. Every weekly tenant in the east or south of London is, for the week, a dual owner, and to say that this Bill is going to abolish dual ownership is claiming for it something which is not true. What the Bill does is for sixty-eight and a-half years to make the State a dual owner, and after that period it keeps the State as a dual owner with a smaller interest. The real change proposed is that the contract between the State as a dual owner will be permanent as regards time and invariable as regards rent. The essence of the transformation to be effected by the Bill when it is completely accomplished is the invariability of rent and the abolition of interference by the State in fixing values. The system of the State fixing of values in Ireland I look upon as a real gaoler of British capital invested in land in Ireland, which, if thus released, might be applied to Irish industry but which is now locked up in Ireland and incapable of being applied to that purpose. Speaking as a Member for an English constituency, I am not frightened by the magnitude of the financial transaction involved in this

Bill. I am more frightened at the growing danger of the economic condition of Ireland if you do nothing at all. That is my ground as an English Member for giving my support to the Bill.

Now I turn to the principle of the measure, which is designed to relieve us of this incubus of State fixing of rents. As I see the Bill, it is mainly this. It assumes as the basis of correct rental the sum of £4,000,000. The Bill proposes, by loans and cash payments from the Exchequer, to induce the owners to sell and the tenants to buy, and the process is to be this. The owners are to make their lands over to the State, and the State is to vest them in the occupiers on certain conditions. The transaction is to be purely voluntary, and, therefore, to what extent the Bill will become operative entirely depends upon the attractions it offers to both the owners and the occupiers. The terms offered to both—and I shall express my views upon them—are the essence of the Bill. These are matters which I think can be dealt with in Committee, and I shall not make any observations upon the details. What I wish to point out—and it is very important—is that the business of taking over real property from one party and conveying it to another is a tedious, intricate, and costly process. It involves heavy legal and other expenses. In private transactions of such sales of real property this expense falls on both the vendor and the purchaser alike. Under this Bill the State occupies the position of the honest broker, and all the cost and labour and anxiety of the transaction falls upon the owner, while the purchaser entirely escapes. The landlord, if he makes up his mind to sell, has to go through all the labour, toil, anxiety, and cost of putting his property before the Commissioners in such a form as to make it possible for them to deal with it. The tenant, having signed his agreement to purchase, has nothing more to do than to go about his farm, attend to his business, and wait until the time when, without any cost or trouble, the State vests the ownership in him. This is very important, and I think the House will see why I have mentioned it. This Bill does provide for meeting the cost of the owners by a grant of £12,000,000—that is about, roughly speaking, 10 per cent. on the total purchase money. It also provides for all the expenses of the State Broker, and the establishment, on such a scale as may be necessary, of a new department of Estates Commissioners with an army of salaried civil servants, all future claimants for pensions. The £12,000,000 grant is called a bonus. The hon. Gentleman who preceded me called it a dole and a bribe to the landlords. Well, hon. Members are entitled to call it by any name they like, but what I am endeavouring to do is to show what this really means in regard to the owners. I really think that those who use the terms "bribe" and "dole" regarding a grant which is to cover costs, are really not conversant with the facts of the position. It is not a dole, it is not a bribe, and it is not a bonus. It is a fund to provide for the payment of the lawyers, costs and conveyance expenses, which are unavoidable. Lawyers must be paid, and when they are satisfied, and the expenses met, very little, I think, will be left out of this £12,000,000 to go into the landlord's pocket as cash to provide interest for the support of his family. I think it will mostly find its way into the lawyer's pocket. Another point which I wish to draw attention to is that when the transaction is complete and the occupier has a reduced rent, having had no disturbance, and no anxiety, the landlord has the anxiety of making and watching investments, and of adapting himself to an entirely new condition of things. I think, therefore, I am entitled to say, on behalf of the landlords of Ireland, that it is neither just nor fair to talk of this twelve millions as a dole, a bribe, or a bonus to the landlords.

In looking at this Bill with reference to the future of my country the tests I apply to judge of its value are very briefly these. I think that neither time nor money will make this Bill successful unless its provisions work with and not against economic laws. In summarising the position of Ireland you may broadly classify all the land of Ireland under three heads. There are the great grazing farms, there are the large mixed pasture and tillage lands, and there are the multitudinous small holdings. The grazing farms of the big tenants are mostly in the eastern part, and the multitudinous small holdings are mostly in the west. What is the position in the west of these multitudinous small occupiers? It is that of labourers with allotments and no demand for their labour. That is really the true economic position. The grazing farms depend upon not labour, but upon cattle. The big mixed pasture and tillage farms depend upon both labour and stock. In view of the free foreign importation of grain, tillage, except in relation to stock rearing, does not pay, so stock and butter are the mainstays of Irish agricultural industry. Providence has given Ireland natural advantages which favour dairy farming and stock rearing. Given equal knowledge and equal skill Great Britain could not compete against Ireland in a given area in stock rearing and dairy produce. The smaller farmers rear calves, but these calves they must sell as yearlings, for they have not land enough to feed them afterwards. It is the big farmers who buy the yearlings, and a blow struck at the graziers and big farmers would be a blow struck at the sale and price of stock in the congested districts. I do attach very great importance to this particular question. When you remember that the big mixed farms require labour, and that the multitude of labourers with allotments in the West have labour to give, it will be seen that any injury done to the big farmer is really an injury to small occupiers in the neighbourhood and in congested districts. Therefore I say that the big farmer is not a man to injure but to encourage, and one condition which is a principle in the Bill, and to which I strongly object, is the exclusion of the big farmers from the operation of the measure. I think it is important to the economic position of Ireland that you should help to improve their position. I think from the point of view of labour, and from the point of view of the reciprocal economic value to the small occupier, the big farmers, who are the advance guard of agriculture in Ireland ought not to be excluded. They are the leaders of thought and example in the localities, and as a good influence for social order and economic stability they ought to be encouraged as a matter of high policy, and, therefore, when the Bill comes to the Committee stage, I shall most certainly move an Amendment to include the big farmers, and enable them to purchase under this Bill.

There is an important point connected with the finance principle on which this Bill is founded, and that is, that the purchase money is to be calculated on the fixed basis of the second-term rents. That is to say, it is to be based upon rents arbitrarily fixed for the second period by a method and procedure which has been condemned by the impartial Royal Commission presided over by Mr. Justice Fry. For my own part, I do not care about phrases, formulæ, and theories, for in practice I believe that the question between the owner and the occupier, contemplating purchase and sale, is not the number of years purchase but the amount the owner will receive in cash, and the annual instalments the occupier will have to pay. I believe the adoption of the second-term rents as the fixed standard of computation will be a dangerous principle if the State fixing of rents is to proceed as before and now on unsold estates. By this Bill it seems that this State fixing of rents is to go on. The sanguine view of my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary is that, under the provisions of this Bill, its administration will be so easily carried out that fifteen years will see the whole of the land of Ireland transferred from the owners to the tenants. I believe that to be altogether too sanguine a view. I believe it will be nearer thirty years, and if you want to expedite it you will have to deal with the agents and the solicitors. You must recollect that they are the advisers of the landlords, and that it is not to their interest that landed property should be sold. As a practical man, I say that if you wish to expedite the transfer contemplated by this Bill you must remember what human nature is, and you must give agents and solicitors an interest in the sale and purchase. If you are going to set up the second-term rents as the permanent standard, I want to show you the position you are going to get into. You will have, side by side with this State rent-fixing method, which has been condemned by the Royal Commission, another system, and in eight years time you will have third-term rents. You will then have rents fixed 20 per cent. below the present figures. You can pretty well judge what the sub-commission courts will do with the third-term rents by what they have done on the second-term. There is no doubt that the Chief Secretary may have an answer to this, and I am only putting it forward as my view of the case. It is essential in a matter like this that all views should be put forward in order to give the Government and the right hon. Gentleman a chance of seeing where they are wrong. In eight years—that is in 1911—only one half of the tenants will, under this Bill, have purchased, that is according to the sanguine calculations of my right hon. friend, and the other half will be waiting to purchase. If, then, in 1911, 20 per cent. is taken off second-term rents, you must face the position that the half who have purchased will consider they have a grievance. The half who have not yet purchased will then expect to be allowed to do so on the basis of third-term rents, 20 per cent. less than the second-term rents. This Bill set up two competing departments, and the Government must find themselves in a position where they must choose between two courses. They now have to choose between Codlin and Short, and say whether the Land Conference second-term rent basis or the revising system of rent is the friend. I urge that this Bill ought to bar the fixing of third-term rents.

I am in general in favour of the decadal reduction principle of the Act of 1891 as really advantageous to the State. I would remark that the hon. Member for South Tyrone, like all converts to a new faith, is more violent than his new Leader in his demands. I will not congratulate the hon. and learned Member for Waterford on his recruit. The hon. Member for Waterford himself expressed his strong admiration for the principle of the Bill, and his intention to support it, and then he proceeded to name nine points he considered vital and which he will fight to have amended. And then there were many other objections which the hon. Member had to the Bill—so many that he refrained from mentioning them. That is a very funny way of giving loyal support to the Bill. However, that is a matter for the hon. Member, and not for me. I say, on behalf of the landlords—[Laughter]—I am not ashamed to be a landlord; I have no reason to be so. I do not wish to say anything to disturb the good humour of tion. Members opposite, but I have the right to say what I consider to be the real attitude of the Irish landlords on this Bill. It is this, that they support the measure because it is the only practically possible remedy for the economic collapse of Ireland under the operation of the Act of 1881. They only demand fair play and reasonable and just consideration. They recognise the economic chaos into which the Act of 1881 has plunged their country, and they are ready to sacrifice their sentiment—it is a trial, but they are ready to do so. They, however, consider that the country and Parliament have no right or title to do the State service by robbing them and sacrificing their interests, and they will do what they can, by all constitutional means, to enforce their claims, and they trust to the honour of Parliament to do them simple justice.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): According to the Chief Secretary this is the forty-first Irish Land Bill that has been introduced into the House of Commons in the last forty years, and of that number I should think at least thirty-five have been introduced since the opening of the present land war in the year 1879. I think all those Members who were in the House to-night at the time the Prime Minister delivered his most eloquent and powerful speech will recollect that that right hon. Gentleman described the existing land system of Ireland as—I quote his exact words—

> "As bad as could be imagined, and that there was no fault attaching to any land system which does not attach to the present land system in Ireland."

That was not a very brilliant record of forty years' continuous effort to give us a good land system in Ireland. I venture to say that upon that testimony of the Prime Minister some of the withers of hon. Members opposite must have been wrung, and they must have put to themselves the question, "After all, does the House of Commons rule Ireland?" The Land Question is still unsettled in Ireland, notwithstanding these years of effort, and now, to-night, we are asked to read for the second time a Land Bill more far-reaching and larger in its provisions than any introduced into the House of Commons since the year 1881. I ask hon. Members at this stage in this most painful and tragic history—I may add, this somewhat disgraceful history to England—why is it that throughout all these years failure has ever dogged every attempt of this House to settle the Land Question in Ireland? Why is it that after forty Land Acts we are now gifted with a system so complicated that the only men who can thrive under it are the lawyers; a system by which the industry of Ireland is cribbed, cabined, confined, ruined, and crushed, and by which poverty and social disorder are made permanent in the country? If this has been the result of all your exertions and debates, it is because that throughout these years it has been the practice and custom of Ministers to disregard and treat with contempt the opinion of those sent across the Channel to speak in the House of Commons on behalf of Ireland. There has been one exception to that long list of dismal failures to which the Prime Minister alluded—one solitary exception, as far as my knowledge goes, one Act which, so far as it went, was an unmitigated success—that was the Ashbourne Act. Why was it a success? Because, so far as I know—for I was absent from the country at the time—it owed its existence to a private arrangement made by the Irish Party with the Tory Government of the day, and because in the case of that Act alone the opinion of the Irish National Party was allowed to prevail.

I come down for a moment to the last great Land Act, the Act of 1896. When that Act was passed Ireland was peaceable, the forces of the National Party were paralysed, and the Government had Ireland completely in their hands. We were then told that the Land Question was settled in Ireland for many generations; but I myself ventured to prophesy that it was not settled for a single generation, and that as soon as the unfortunate divisions which then paralysed the National forces in Ireland passed away, as I thought they would, the Land Question in Ireland would emerge as acute and as clamorous as ever. Has that prophecy been verified or has it not? I refer to it not for the purpose of glorifying its prescience but in order to impress on Parliament the folly and the madness of attempting to settle this difficult and complicated Irish question, which goes down to the root of Irish life, and at the same time neglecting the opinion of the Irish people. Let me say a word on one great question which always crops up in these debates. The present land system is traced back by certain hon. Members to the Land Act of 1881. I have heard over and over again in this House, and it has been repeated to-night, the Land Act condemned as the root and source of all the trouble in Ireland and the disorganisation of its people. Lord Dunraven, in a speech delivered at the Constitutional Club on the 29th April, said that the Act of 1881 had had disastrous consequences to the landlord class, had demoralised the people, and had been ruinous to the main industry of the country—agriculture. His Lordship said that he could not see how it could have been otherwise. Parliament might shirk its responsibility, but it could not deny that it had, from the best motives, forced upon Ireland legislation which had proved to be demoralising to the people and ruinous to the main industry of the country. What a travesty of the truth! The Act of 1881 had demoralised the people of Ireland! One would suppose to listen to those who condemn the Land Act of 1881 that Ireland was a paradise of peace and of social and industrial prosperity before the passing of that Act. It was a hell; and I say that the Act of 1881 was the first step taken in the emancipation of our people, who before that Act was passed were nothing but serfs. It is from the Act of 1881 that dates the emancipation of our country from agrarian crime, and if to-day a considerable section of Irish landlords has happily attained to a more reasonable frame of mind it is due in large measure to twenty years' experience of that Act.

And the Irish people are not so dead to all sense of gratitude for political wisdom exhibited towards them as not to recognise that, after our own right hand and our own organisation, they had to thank that great statesman, Mr. Gladstone, who, in spite of fierce and ferocious opposition, struck the first link from the fetters which had bound them through the ages, and recognised the right of the Irish people to property on their own soil. If to-day we are discussing a great measure which contains the potency and promise of the final emancipation of the Irish people, it is Mr. Gladstone we have to thank for clearing the road. Hon. Members opposite talk about their policy of land purchase. I must correct the Prime Minister himself in that respect. He was wrong to-night when he said that the policy of land purchase, so far as this House was concerned, took its origin in the Secretary of State for India in 1883. That is not true. The policy of land purchase, so far as this House is concerned, took its origin from John Bright during the debates on the Land Act of 1870. It was further extended by the Act of 1881; but, after all, where did the policy of land purchase as the only and final settlement of the Land Question take its real origin? It took its origin from the Land League. I would remind hon. Members that when the Act of 1881 was introduced, the leaders of the Land League declared to this House and to the country that no tinkering with rent would settle this question, and that the only policy giving promise of social peace to Ireland was the policy we are now engaged in discussing in this Bill.

And now I ask is there not a deep lesson involved in this retrospect of twenty-three years? Now, after twenty-three years of fierce struggle, after the expenditure of many millions of money in Land Courts and in prosecutions, after passing many Coercion Acts, after thousands of imprisonments and evictions, and after twenty-three years of social war you are now asked, so far as the principal object of the Bill is concerned, to carry out a policy which was condemned as socialism and confiscation twenty-three years ago. Many speakers have alluded to the remarkable circumstances under which the present Bill was introduced. No one who knows Ireland, or has been involved in the land struggle for the last score of years, will deny for a moment that the circumstances under which the Government have approached the solution of this problem on the present occasion are entirely unparalleled. There is no doubt that an opportunity presents itself to the present Ministry, such as no Irish Government ever had before, of settling this matter, and the question which everyone in Ireland is asking himself day and night with extraordinary and feverish interest is, "Will the Government rise to the occasion, and give us at last social peace in Ireland after all these centuries and generations of war?" The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment asked—

> "What are we going to get, provided we give all this money and this credit? Are we going to get some political result?"

No, I do not think you are, from the Unionist point of view. The Prime Minister very frankly and very honourably replied—

> "That is not what the Government are looking for; that is not what the Government ought to look for."

We, on our side, are content to aid the Government, and give them every fair play in endeavouring to settle this great social war. Some Unionists think that by ending the social war in Ireland, by introducing good Government in the sphere of law and order instead of what has so long prevailed, they will strengthen the Union; but they are mistaken; the national demand will survive a land settlement. Let the Union take care of itself in the future. I do not think the Government are looking for political effects in introducing this Bill, and if they are, there is a very poor look-out for such. I believe the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary, is honestly desirous of signalising his tenure of office in Ireland by solving this question, which has proved too hard a nut to crack for many of his predecessors. Now, there are many people in Ireland who still believe that you will never settle this Land Question without the application of the principle of compulsion, and it is to me a very strange and extraordinary thing that the Government should so shrink from the application of compulsion in regard to the minor interests of land purchase, when compulsion, as the right hon. Gentleman well knows, and as everybody else acquainted with the Irish Land Laws knows, has been applied for many years to the superior and middle interests. Why should they exempt from its operation the only interest in the land of Ireland which is the source of all the trouble? Now, fortunately, on the present occasion we have an absolutely authoritative expression of the will and opinion of the Irish people in regard to this Bill. That expression was given in detail by the Great Convention which assembled in Dublin on the 17th and 18th of last month. I may say of the Convention, of the character of its delegates, of the order and earnestness of its proceedings, that they extorted, even from the strongest opponents of the tenants' cause, a meed of admiration. Hon. Members will admit that, taking into account the fact that the Convention was summoned of delegates belonging to an organisation, the foremost plank in the platform of which was the application of compulsion, and that they were called upon to consider a Bill which appeared to many of the delegates to contemplate an extreme price being paid for the land, it would not have been unnatural to expect strong language and strong resolutions from the Convention. I was not present, but I have read very carefully the testimony of all sections in Ireland as to the sobriety and conciliatory manner of the Convention. What was the decision arrived at? In the first place, it was manifest that the sense of the Convention was that the Bill as it stands cannot be accepted as a settlement of the Irish Land Question, or as offering any fair prospects of working out a settlement of that question. The principle and the objects of the Bill had the warmest sympathy of the Convention, and, without waiving their views as to the possible necessity of compulsion, the members of the Convention evidently were determined to give credit to the Government for honest intentions and for a generous desire for peace; and they resolved not to do or say anything calculated to prevent the Government having full fair play in their present attempt to settle the Land Question. In this spirit the Convention claims only such Amendments as seemed to them essential to make the Bill acceptable and a good working measure for Ireland. What I desire most solemnly to impress on the Government is, that these Amendments honestly represent the minimum of the popular demand. They were not put forward in any captious or critical spirit, but by a body dominated by a very strong desire to smooth the path of the Government and open the doors of Ireland to a course of peace. And if the Government should refuse to adopt these Amendments, I am convinced that the prospects of their measure will be overclouded, that its fate will be the same as those of its predecessors, and that its passage into law will be followed by fresh agitations and further Land Bills in the future.

I will not go into any elaborate details of criticism on this very complicated measure, but just recapitulate the points of vital importance on which Amendments are necessary. First of all, the maximum limit of reduction must be removed and the system of classification of second-term rents. There must be provision for the protection of future tenants and caretakers, and full and generous provision for the evicted tenants, and the insertion of a time limit, after which no landlord shall initiate proceedings for sale or else lose the benefits of the Bill. There is only one other point to which I will allude, and that is the clause dealing with the Land Judges' Court. I say deliberately that no measure proposing to settle the Irish Land Question can be accepted as satisfactory or hopeful which does not contain provisions for reforming or bringing to an end that extraordinary or maleficent institution, the Land Judges' Court. One-sixth of the land of Ireland is in the hands of that Court, and it will thus be seen how vital a matter is this particular portion of the Bill.

I wish to say a few words with regard to the evicted tenants. The manner and spirit in which this subject is dealt with will have a great effect on the prospects of the Bill and the temper in which it will be received in Ireland when passed into law. From the point of view of the number of people involved this is a small question. When the Evicted Tenants Act was passed there were about 800 of these people. Half of them have since disappeared. Some have emigrated, some have been reinstated, and some have died, so that there are only about 400 families now to be dealt with. I believe the whole question could be settled in a generous way for, at the outside, £200,000, in a way that would strike the imagination of Ireland and enormously smooth the working of this Bill. If you leave any section of the people outside the scope of the Bill you will have, wherever they are, centres of ill-feeling and disturbance, which will prejudice the mind of Irishmen with regard to the working of the Bill. When this Bill becomes law the evicted tenants will naturally fall into three classes. There will be those on the estates purchased by the Estates Commission; there will be those on the estates sold by private bargain between landlord and tenant; and there will, in the third place, be those on the estates of the landlords who will not sell at all, or will not sell for seven or eight years. I do urge on the Government that they should introduce a clause dealing with all classes of evicted tenants, and, furthermore, that some effort should be made to get the evicted tenants back into their homes. I believe, and I say it deliberately, that with a reasonable amount of money, and not compulsorily but with authority vested in the Estates Commissioners to approach the parties who may be in possession of these farms, friendly and amicable arrangements to this end could be made in almost every case. Just imagine what a good effect that would have on the public temper of Ireland if this were carried out successfully. We have heard a great deal about conciliation and peace—it would be a pleasant thing for Ireland—and I am waiting to see some striking proof of the desire for it. Here is an opportunity for the representatives of the landlords in this House to show a real spirit of conciliation. It will not do to say to these men that they must wait for fifteen or twenty years. The whole thing can be done in a year if properly approached, and I do hope that one result of this Bill will be to close up this source of weakness.

Now I come to the question of price. What is the object of putting into a voluntary Bill a minimum price? I have not heard throughout the whole of the discussion any reason given for this minimum. Now, let me give the House just one or two figures to show how absurd the matter is. I have here the Government Return giving the average rates of purchase in Ireland for the last several years. Here are the averages:—In 1886 the figures of purchase were 18 times the rent; 1887, the figures were 17·6; 1888, 17 years; 1889, 16·4; 1890, 16·7; 1891, 17 years, and so on, the average always ranging to about 17 years' purchase of land. Down to the 31st December last the rates rose to 18·1 years; but we must remember that that was paid in depreciated Land Stock, and was really only equal to about 16½ years' purchase. Now that is the average. But that is not the strongest fact. At page seventy-seven of the Report, taken in counties, the average during the year 1886 varied from 23·6 to 13·8, and so on; and from 20 to 10·7 during the three years ending 31st March, 1894, from 25·1 to 12·5, and from 31st March, 1895, from 21·2 to 6·6. Down as low as six years' purchase, and yet it is proposed to put into this Bill, which is held to be a benefit to the tenants, a minimum price of twenty five years' purchase. Was there ever such a thing heard of? The fact is that the values of these farms are infinite in variety. There are farms worth twenty years' purchase; some there are worth more than twenty years; but the vast majority of them are not worth anything like that. There are some not worth ten years, and some not worth eight years. To tell me that you can put into the Bill a bed of Procrustes is preposterous.

With regard to the maximum, let me in one word state what is the present protection. You may remember that when you start a system of land purchase such as the present system there is absolutely no protection for the Treasury unless you have some system of inspection. In the first place, tenants may be coerced by arrears or other reasons into bidding prices infinitely beyond the true value, whereupon the Treasury and the taxpayer would suffer. There is no case of repudiation, because everybody will agree there is no danger of repudiation; but what would you do if you had the people manifestly brought to poverty? What would you think if you had a quantity of people here paying more than an equivalent? Therefore the Treasury must have some sort of protection. For the last few years the Treasury must have some protection from collusive and dishonest bargains. I brought before the House some time ago the case of a bad debt in which two relatives were concerned. The mother sold to her son a farm, and made him the tenant, and then they bargained for its sale for about three times its value. The farm was inspected and sold, and the mother and son divided the bargain between them. Therefore, they could have collusive bargains and large sums might be extracted from the Treasury if you have not some procedure of this kind. Between August, 1885, and March, 1895, the advances had been cut down from £11,361,000 to £9,884,000 and more than £1,000,000 had been struck off the prices agreed to by the landlords and the tenants. In one particular instance the tenant agreed to pay £525 and the Land Commission cut it down to £400, and this action was subsequently confirmed. That is the way the Treasury has been protected, and if you abolish inspection you must have some maximum limit, because the lower the price at which the land is sold the better security there will be for the Treasury. If a landlord is willing to sell his land cheaply to the tenant, why is it the business of the State to say: "You shall not sell your property for what you are willing to accept for it?"

I will pass over the question of future tenants, perpetual rent charges, and also the subject of the Congested Districts Board, but I desire to emphasise as strongly as I can the appeal made by the Chairman in regard to grazing ranches. This is a most burning question, and if you cannot see your way to settle it then your Land Bill cannot do much good. When I heard the hon. Member for Islington declaring that land purchase was doing no good, I wondered if he had read the report of Mr. Bayley in regard to the Dillon Estate. Has the hon. Member read that Report, which states that up to the date of the purchase of that estate the cattle lived in the houses of the people? To anyone who visits that estate now the improvement is manifest, for there you will see the people in the very poorest districts responding to the slightest chance they get to make progress. I think Irish Members are about the only section of this nation who really understand and value the existence of a rural population. Your system of big farms in this country has sacrificed your rural population, and you are suffering for it now in the decline of the physique of your people. The same thing has been going on in Scotland, and in Ireland alone the people have clung to their small holdings, with the result that it is from Ireland that you get the best soldiers in the world. In spite of emigration, poverty and starvation the physique of the people of Ireland to-day is better than the physique of the people of this country. This really is the great question of preserving the remnant of the population of Ireland and of enabling the people to live in decency and comfort. Your present Bill, however, will do nothing of the sort. The object of the Congested Districts Board is good, but if you pass this Bill in its present state the people of Connaught will be driven back again to commence agitation.

There is one other subject which I wish to emphasise, and it is in regard to the rural labourers. Upon this point I claim that we are ahead of this country, where you have sacrificed your rural population, with the result that the farmers of England are now suffering accordingly. In Ireland we have invited the labourer into our national organisation, and we have pledged ourselves to make his cause our cause, and where the farmers have shown selfishness in this matter we have brought our organisation to bear upon them, and we have insisted that the labourer shall get fair play. I claim that we are carrying on a great civilising work, but in order to effectively preserve the agriculture of our rural population you must give the labourers decent homes and make their lives worth living. I think it is deplorable that the right hon. Gentleman will not put into this Bill two or three well-drafted clauses that would solve this question of the rural labourers. This labourers question is one which will receive the support of the Ulster Members just as much as our support. The labourers clauses would pass with very little discussion, and I cannot conceive why the right hon. Gentleman does not boldly face that portion of the subject.

I have now said all that I feel it necessary to say. The situation in Ireland is undoubtedly unprecedented and amazing. When I left Ireland six months ago every breeze was laden with the sound of battle, and the air resounded with shouts of battle. The prisons were getting crowded, and the leaders of our forces were being put into prison. We were then described by the Government as traitors, with whom there was to be no dealing. When I returned three months later the whole situation was changed. The war had ceased, the prison doors were open, and the leaders of all parties were using expressions of conciliation and showing a desire for peace. The change in the situation was extraordinary, and I must confess that when I came home I sometimes asked myself whether, like an historic character, I had not been asleep for a century, and I wondered whether we had not reached the year 2000. To complete my bewilderment I found myself described by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as belonging to a chivalrous nation, the members of which are chiefly characterised by their ardent desire to pay their debts. This is not the time for me to speculate as to what powerful influence has been at work to produce this miraculous change. The situation has been created, and what we have got to do to-day is to deal with it and get the most out of it we can for our country. About one thing there can be no difference of opinion, and that is that the situation offers to the Government such an opportunity as has never occurred since the Act of Union was passed for settling the Irish Land Question. This is a question which you cannot ignore. When I hear men talking about rejecting this Bill, I want to know what they propose to do. Does anyone imagine, after the introduction of this Bill, and after the speech we have listened to from the Prime Minister, that the Irish Land Question can be left alone? I say that so long as it is left unsettled it will remain an ever flowing source of evil and mischief in Ireland, and an equally great source of weakness to this country. When I hear hon. Members talk about the heavy and intolerable burden this Bill will lay on the English taxpayer I reply that it will lay no such burden whatever. As regards the £12,000,000, it is rather a wrench to me to part with it, but I am afraid we should not get that sum in any other way except by combining with the landlords. But that sum is going to be spent in Ireland, and it is really no concern of ours, for that money has to be spent in Ireland in any case, and the only question is whether it shall be spent in criminal prosecutions and upon the police. In conclusion, I would say a word to my Radical friends in this House. I would say to them—I hope you will not oppose this Bill, for it is removing from your path, in that hour which is not far distant when you will cross the floor of this House, a mountain; it is settling a question which you could not settle, and where you can do good, and where I trust you will do good, is by assisting us to obtain those Amendments which we claim in this Bill, and which will make it a real benefit and the means of restoring peace to Ireland.

MR. ATKINSON: With the exception of my hon. friends who have respectively moved and seconded this Amendment, almost every hon. Member who has spoken to-night has approved of this Bill, and has expressed his readiness to support the Second Reading. It is only natural that hon. Members should make a protest in reference to the Committee points with which they disagree, but I am sure they will not consider me guilty of any want of courtesy if I refuse upon this occasion to follow them into a discussion upon details of machinery upon which different minds may form different conclusions, and which, more properly, belong to the Committee stage of the Bill. The Government think that when the Committee stage is reached we shall be able to give good reasons for the framing of this measure as it is framed, but at the same time we are willing to give the most fair and candid consideration to every Amendment that may be moved, and to every argument that may be adduced in support of it. I do not propose, therefore, to follow hon. Members who have addressed the House in the many points upon which they have spoken, but I think English Members who speak, or profess to speak, on behalf of the English taxpayers have a right to demand from the Government any arguments that may be forthcoming to defend the financial provisions of the Bill, and to show that they are safe and wise. I do not intend to enter at all upon a discussion of the question as to whether this Bill, if passed, will promote or retard Home Rule, because I contend that if the grievance exists, and if a remedy ought to be provided for it, it is the duty of a Unionist Government, above all other Governments, to provide that remedy irrespective of the effect it may have upon the question of Home Rule. Therefore, I think it is entirely unreasonable that hon. Members who have spoken should argue that although there may be grievances, and although the condition of Ireland is unsatisfactory at the present moment, those grievances should not be remedied until the National Party of Ireland adjure Home Rule aspirations. Therefore, I shall only deal with the question of price as it affects the British taxpayer. I think that those English Members who have discussed this matter have left out of consideration a good deal of what is the actual condition of Ireland at the present moment. I do not propose to follow at all some of those hon. Gentlemen who have preceded me into the discussion of the effects of the Act of 1881, and the evils which have attended it. It may have done much good and it might have been necessary at the time it was passed, and it may have been the only way of preserving order in Ireland, but nobody acquainted with the condition of things in Ireland can deny that it is surrounded with complicated agrarian relations and with exasperating and ever-recurring litigation, that it has certainly impoverished landlords — I do not know that it has enriched tenants in the same degree— that it has evoked a spirit of hostility and suspicion between the two partners in the partnership you have created which retards and prevents improvements.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Was there no exasperation in 1880?

MR. ATKINSON: I say that it has altogether destroyed any possibility of co-operation between the two. The right hon. Gentleman disagrees with me in that; he cannot disagree in this—that both parties, landlord and tenant, at the present moment are anxious to sever the bonds that bind them, and to escape from that position. Land purchase has been proceeding for thirty-four years. It has proceeded under the Acts of 1869, 1870, 1881, 1885, 1888, and 1891, until at the present time £24,300,000 has been lent, £830,000 is being paid in annuities, and the arrears are £3,000. The system has been an eminent success. Where there is purchase you will find the social conditions and the standards of comfort of the purchasers have been raised, agriculture has been improved, and, above and beyond all, contentment has been established and peace reigns. The result is that you have every part of Ireland, the Home Rulers of the south as well as the Anti-Home Rulers of the north, demanding that facilities should be given them to escape from the condition into which the Act of 1881 has placed them, and to enable them to purchase the farms on which they live. No other result could be expected when one man, who is industrious, sober and thrifty, who is faithful to his obligations, can see his more thriftless neighbour on the other side of the hedge prospering as a peasant proprietor, while he himself is paying a rent much in advance of the annuity charged on the other. Something, therefore, must be done. If the system established by the Act of 1881 proceeds, you will have that deterioration which it undoubtedly encourages, and you can never hope to allay the discontent I have described. There are three alternatives—to leave things as they are, to induce the landlords to sell, or to compel the landlords to sell. The hon. Member for East Mayo complains that we have not taken into account Irish opinion. That complaint can hardly be justified. I do not know what better expression of Irish opinion the Government could obtain before framing their Bill than was furnished by the recent Land Conference, which professed to speak on behalf of both landlords and tenants. I think the hon. Member for East Mayo, when he read all those statistics about sixteen years and seventeen years purchase, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone, when he explained that twenty-three years purchase was all that he could possibly sanction, must have forgotten the proposal of the Land Conference that the tenants should purchase at from 15 to 25 per cent. below second-term rents.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: And decadal reductions.

MR. ATKINSON: There is nothing there about seventeen or twenty-three years' purchase—and that the landlords should have such a sum as, if invested at 3 per cent. or 3¼ per cent. if guaranteed by the State, would bring them in their present income less, at the most, than 10 per cent. I really cannot understand how the Government are to proceed in the way of consulting Irish feeling if they are to be confronted with these complaints and denunciations when they have taken Irish opinion and in a great degree framed their measure thereon. I was perfectly astounded to hear my hon. friend deliver a long speech to-night, the legitimate conclusion of each part of which would be that the report of the Conference was misleading, and that it was one which no Government should select as the basis of their measure. Let us see what the demand is. The demand is that a sum of £100,000,000 should be advanced on loan. Is that likely to be a safe transaction? Endeavour to judge of that, first of all, from the past. If the tenants have paid in the past I think it is a legitimate inference that they will pay in the future. In the past, as I have said, although they had purchased under the different Acts to the extent of nearly £25,000,000, and the annuities amount to £830,000, they are in default only £3,000. Would any commercial business or bank consider such a business unsafe if at the end they were only £3,000 to the bad?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): The £3,000 are only arrears.

MR. ATKINSON: And even that sum does not represent irrecoverable debts. I am taking the amount drawn from the guarantee fund to meet the defaults of the year, but it by no means follows that when proceedings are taken the sums will not be recovered, and the guarantee fund recouped. Is there any reason to suppose that if £100,000,000 are advanced to create a peasant proprietary, the same class of men will not observe their obligations with the same honesty and punctuality? Then how does the matter stand with regard to the guarantee fund? The guarantee fund is now nearly £3,000,000 and £280,000 of that is the cash portion. £3,000,000 represents nearly 3¼ per cent. on the entire £100,000,000, so that if the entire loan were outstanding to-morrow, and every tenant in Ireland struck against the payment of his rent, the guarantee fund would be almost sufficient to meet the national defalcations. That is the most unlikely thing that could be conceived, so that English Members may rest assured that, as far as the financial provisions are concerned, they will incur no appreciable risk in consenting to the advance of this money on the terms proposed.

Several Members have alluded to the bonus, and objected to it, apparently because it was given to the landlords above and beyond the price of what they consider to be the price of the land sold. But hon. Members must remember that although land has been bought in the past at seventeen years purchase of the particular rent then paid, the supply of that land no longer exists. Landlords will not sell at that price, for the good and sufficient reason that they cannot afford to do so. It is no use telling an Irish landlord that Irish land is one of the worst securities in the world, that he should sell it and invest his money in 3 per cents. Gilt-edged securities are the luxury of the rich; risky securities are the necessity of the needy. It is no use telling a man who, after paying his heavy encumbrance, has only £500 or £600 a year, to sell his land, invest it in 3 per cents., from which he will get an income of £300. He will naturally say that it is better to live on £600 a year as long as he can than to starve on £300. That is the condition of almost all Irish landlords. Seventy-five per cent. of the land in Ireland is in settlement. What does that mean? It means that these funds are shut out from investment in anything but trustee securities. One hon. Member spoke to-night about getting 3½ per cent. on trustee securities. Where will you find them? In addition to that the landlords are encumbered up to nearly half their income, so that all they have to live on is half the rent they receive for the land they own. It is therefore absurd to talk about these men investing in gilt-edged securities; they cannot afford to do it; and they prefer to hold to the rent as long as it is there, rather than immediately bring themselves to comparative penury in order to provide a secure fund for those who succeed them That is one of the reasons this bonus must be offered. But it will not go entirely into the landlords' pockets. In Clause 42 it is provided that it should aid them in bearing the expense of paying off superior interests, making a title, and other matters of that description. Some of it may remain, but it will not be by any means a large proportion. The practical question is, will you induce them to sell by these offers, or will you endeavour to coerce them by a compulsory system? Hon. Members sometimes talk very lightheartedly about compulsion. Have they ever tried to draft a Land Bill on a compulsory system? Have they ever thought of attempting to compel tenants to buy, or of establishing a tribunal to fix the price with which tenants so compelled should be satisfied? Have they ever taken into account the fact that of all ways of acquiring landed property that of compulsion is the most expensive? Take as an illustration an estate, part of which is in the possession of the landlord, and part in the possession of the tenants. Are you to compel the landlord to sell what is in the possession of his tenants, and not to be able to sell what is in his own possession? If you are, unless you abandon all sense of justice from your proceedings, you will have to do as you do in every other system of compulsory sale—viz., pay for the consequential injury to what remains. You cannot cut out the best bits of an estate, or compel a man to sell his land and keep the mansion-house, otherwise he will have what is practically a worthless drug in the market. I heard an hon. Member talk of the injustice of selling demesnes, and he said he would be very happy to get an advance made to him. Really, when hon. Members stand up to discuss Irish land legislation in that manner they make the whole agrarian question different in Ireland to that in England. There is no more sense in saying that that should be done in Ireland which is done in England than to suggest that the clothes in which a man shivers in in Labrador should be put on a man that swelters near the Equator. The compulsory system, whatever may be its merits, cannot be cheap, and if it is very expensive there is a great deal of the expense which you cannot put on the purchasing tenant. Assuming for the moment that a tenant is purchasing a farm close to the demesne, and that compensation is given to the landlord for the injury done to him, you cannot put that on the purchaser—it must be borne by the seller. I have some knowledge of the procedure and methods by which land is acquired by the State, and am sure that unless you adopt some very different system and banish what has hitherto been regarded as moral justice, you will not have a more costly and more irritating way of acquiring land than by compulsion. The bonus amounts to £30,000,000 at the most, and when all the purchase is carried out it can only be £12,000,000, and will be paid off every year by a Sinking Fund. My right hon. friend says he hopes to introduce economies in Ireland that will more than meet the expenditure and, in addition, bring about a spirit of peace.

In connection with the question of price the Leader of the Opposition said if the tenant were forced to give an extravagant price the security would be endangered. Several hon Gentlemen object to the limits that have been introduced into the first Clause. In regard to that I wish to remind the House that under the purchase system as it at present exists, the State is secured by the exercise of caution. They are not to advance more than can be secured. The result is that anybody who has watched this can have no doubt that loans have been refused which might with perfect safety have been made. That is conclusive, because those loans were refused at the very time that it was possible to keep the whole purchase money as a guarantee deposit if necessary. That has worked unsatisfactorily. I do not believe either landlord or tenant is satisfied with the exercise of that discretion by the Commissioners. Complaints have been made on both sides that sales have been retarded by over-caution on the part of the Commissioners.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That only affects the maximum price, not the minimum.

MR. ATKINSON: They refused sales that might have been made with perfect safety. I do not accuse them of acting improperly, but I think they were supersensitive about incurring possible loss, and refused loans that might have been made with perfect safety.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman puts his own judgment against that of the Commissioners'?

MR. ATKINSON: I say that objection was made on both sides. I also say that they did not give satisfaction, not that they were not right.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Satisfaction to the British taxpayer?

MR. ATKINSON: Therefore in this Bill we have superseded that. We have deprived them of the exercise of that discretion, and we have made it compulsory upon them to advance the money. But if you make that compulsory upon them it is obvious that you must fix limits. We selected the superior limit for two reasons, the first to protect the State, and the second to protect the tenant. Although the landlord and tenant may agree, they shall not get an advance that will jeopardise the interest of the State, or that is so extravagant as to be oppressive. We selected the minimum limit to protect the landlord on his side from possible oppression and coercion of the tenant.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: But that is the reason of the maximum limit.

MR. ATKINSON: No. We selected the one limit to protect the tenant from coercion on the part of the landlord, and the other limit to protect the landlord from the tenant. The hon. Gentleman has said he will raise that question in Committee. If he does, of course we will be willing to discuss it, and he will not expect me to pursue it further on this occasion. He also refers to the question of compulsion under Clause 17. I think he will admit himself that it is necessary to apply some kind of compulsion to force a small and reluctant minority of tenants not to impede sale. It is said that in those cases where the Lord-Lieutenant has dispensed with some requirements of price, it is unfair to permit a fair majority of tenants to coerce the remainder. That is also a matter for discussion, but I think it will be seen that it is absolutely necessary to select some fair proportion so as to prevent a small minority bringing things practically to a deadlock. Under Section 40 of the Act of 1896 tenants can be compelled to buy, but we do not wish to exercise any such pressure as that upon them. Under Section 40 of the Act of 1896 you have offered them a farm at a price, and the compulsion you exercise is to compel them to buy it at that price, whereas under this Section you have not offered at any price, none having been arranged. I submit that those English Members who may be apprehensive that the credit of this country will be pledged too largely, and with some risks to the Imperial taxpayers—if they will cast their minds back to what has occurred in the past, and the mode in which the purchase system has been worked in Ireland, and the fidelity with which the purchasers have discharged their obligation, they must come to the conclusion that, large as are the sums which are to be lent and given, it is a safe pecuniary transaction; no ill results will happen to this country, and there is admittedly a fair prospect of bringing peace, prosperity and contentment to Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to move that the debate be adjourned.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeenshire, S.): I think I ought to say on this Motion that it is extremely improbable that the debate can be concluded to-morrow. There are a large number of Members desiring to speak upon it, and I think it right to let the Government know the position.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House is not here. I will convey to him what has been said, but so far as I know, he anticipates that the debate will be concluded by 12 o'clock to-morrow night.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. William O'Brien*), put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

THE BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

On the Motion for the Third Reading of this Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked whether the principle of the Bill would be extended to Ireland, and whether it was possible to bring in a separate Bill dealing with Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM replied that during the last week he had not been in close touch with the matter, but he would make a note of the hon. and learned Gentleman's question, and although he could not promise that the Bill should be applied to Ireland, he would be very glad to do what was possible.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 5th May, 1903.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned this day at a quarter past Eleven o'clock.

Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill; Reported, without Amendment.

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill; Reported, without Amendment.

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Liverpool University Bill [H.L.]; Jewish Colonisation Association Bill [H.L.]. Committed.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill; Read 2ª, and committed.

Broadstairs Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Bath Corporation Water Bill; Bridgwater Gas Bill; East Ardsley Gas Bill; Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

Midland Railway Bill. Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

North Middlesex Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee. That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on 9th March and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parites having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 9th of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Duke of Manchester and the Lord Barrymore be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth and the Lord Ellenborough; read, and agreed to.

PETITIONS.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition against: of Procurators and Solicitors in Dundee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of: of the Hamilton Merchants' Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FEE FUND OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Account of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords. The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices.

AFRICA No. 3 (1903).

Report by Mr. A. Whyte on his recent travels along the sea coast belt of the British East Africa Protectorate.

TREATY SERIES, No. 7 (1903).

International Convention relative to Bounties on Sugar, signed at Brussels, 5th March, 1902 (ratifications deposited at Brussels, 18th June, 1902, 1st February, 1903).

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 383. Bermuda (Report for 1902).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BERWICKSHIRE COUNTY TOWN BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Commons Message considered (according to Order): Moved, that this House do concur in the following resolution, communicated by the Commons, viz., That it is expedient that a Select Committee of the House of Commons be appointed to join with a Committee of this House to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction—(The Lord President (*Duke of Devonshire*)); agreed to; and a Message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 54.)

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): My Lords, in pursuance of the promise I gave to the House last week, the Amendments which I then indicated have been prepared, and also in pursuance of that promise I propose now to move to insert them, and subsequently, if that is agreed to, to recommit the Bill. I hope that these Amendments have covered the whole, or nearly the whole of the ground of the main objections taken to the Bill by the legal societies. I need only, I think, refer to one of the questions concerned, because I do not propose at this stage, and without further consideration, to strike out Clause 8, to which great exception has undoubtedly been taken. That clause is the one which deals with the proposed discontinuance of the printed index of places in the search register. Objection to that clause is taken by many of the legal societies, but I think I may say that it practically amounts to this, that the index of places has served a useful purpose in the past, and has been of great assistance to that portion of the public who have not the search sheet available, except by favour of the officials of the Register House. The societies, I know, consider that the discontinuance of this index would hamper the public to some extent in their examination of the registers, and especially on the ground that there is no provision that the public should now have access to the search sheet index. On the other hand, Lord Low's Committee were of opinion that this index should be abolished on the ground that the cost of it is wholly out of proportion to its usefulness at the present time, and its abolition was recommended by that Committee. I believe myself, and I am assured by those who know better than I do, that the index of places in the search sheet is really sufficient for all purposes. I believe also that a great part of the objection which has been taken to this clause is met by the fact that the index of names will not be abolished under the Bill as I am now proposing to amend it. I hope, therefore, that further consideration may be given to the subject, and if at subsequent stages it is still desired to strike the present Clause 8 out of the Bill, I will carefully consider what is said on both sides. I do not close the door to further compromise on that point, but I hope it will not be pressed without further and much fuller consideration than has been given to it heretofore. I beg to move that these Amendments be now inserted.

Amendments made. Bill re committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended.

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I need not trouble your Lordships for more than a moment in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, which deals with a technical or rather, a purely local matter. There is a point in the neighbourhood of the city of Bristol at which three dioceses converge, and the arrangements which were made a few years ago for the adjustment of the boundaries in that particular district turned out not to work quite satisfactorily. It is desired to re-adjust them, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are given, by this Bill, power to lay before His Majesty in Council an order to re-arrange the boundaries. The assent of the three Bishops concerned has been obtained, and there is no opposition to the Bill from any quarter.

On Question, Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday next.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE PERSIAN GULF.

*LORD LAMINGTON, who had given notice, To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for information (1) as to the negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the promoters of the Baghdad Railway Company; (2) as to the policy of His Majesty's Government in respect of the interests of this country in the Persian Gulf; and to move for Papers, said: My Lords, the Question that stands in my name was drafted previous to the withdrawal of the Baghdad Railway Scheme. As that scheme has now been withdrawn I do not propose to touch on that portion of my Question, except to say that if there are any Papers which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could lay on the Table with reference to that scheme I am sure they would be read with interest by the public. I now pass to the second portion of my Question, which refers to our position in the Persian Gulf, and I hope I shall not be unnecessarily wearying your Lordships if I trace very briefly the history in connection with our position in those parts. It was not until some thirty or forty years ago that really the Persian Gulf had strictly any right to that name. Up till then the major portion of the eastern shore of the Gulf had been largely held by the State of Muscat. Further north there were other petty States. On the western shores the Turkish power was purely nominal, and the British alone really exercised sovereignty, or what are generally conceived to be the prerogatives of sovereignty, in the Persian Gulf. For the last hundred years or so we have discharged administrative duties; we have settled quarrels and disputes between various chiefs in those regions; we have put down piracy and abolished the slave trade; we alone have made any pretence of surveying the Gulf; one of our British companies has put down buoys and beacons, and any communication with the outer world by cable is solely due to the British Government. That is the position in the Persian Gulf. We were really supreme, and our ascendency was, and, I hope, still is, undisputed. In addition, during the course of that period of 100 years we sent out three large expeditions to fight, sometimes Persia, and sometimes other tribes. We had a flotilla of gunboats on the Tigris, and a regiment of British soldiers at Baghdad. Again, we and our British-Indian subjects alone are really traders in the Persian Gulf. We have to maintain establishments, civil and military, at great expense. In fact, our position in the Persian Gulf has only been achieved by the expenditure of large sums of money, stated to be millions, and also at a great cost of life, for it must be remembered that the climate is perhaps the most unhealthy in any part of the world, and has at all times imposed a severe strain on those we have sent to the Gulf.

There must have been some reason for making these huge sacrifices. All this was really done at the initiative, practically, of the Indian Government, and my contention is that consciously, or unconsciously, the administration of India felt that the security of the Persian Gulf was necessary for the proper defence of our Indian Empire. But, unluckily, whilst we maintained that policy, we also allowed, in the one case, Turkish suzerainty to revive, and we also supported the pretensions of Persia against those of the various chiefs, and particularly so in the case of the Chief of Muscat. We therefore allowed these two Powers to come down and claim certain prerogatives, at practically our expense, because they could never have done so if we had not, by our control of the Gulf, enabled them to revive their authority in those districts. It is only about a year ago that a very fair description was given by the noble Viscount the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of our position in the Gulf, and I will read an extract from his statement. He said—

> "It would be impossible for us, whatever the cause, to abandon what we look upon as our rightful position in Persia. Especially is that true in regard to the Persian Gulf. It is true not only of the Persian Gulf, but of the southern provinces of Persia and those provinces which border on our Indian Empire. Our rights there, and our position of ascendency we cannot abandon. In the Gulf itself our ascendency is not merely a question of theory, but a question of fact."

I think nothing can be more explicit, and no better statement could be made, of our position in the Persian Gulf. We should next consider what other Powers have been doing. But I need not trace the acquisition by Russia of Persian provinces south of the Caucasus on the west, nor of her advance in Trans-Caspian lands in the east, nor of her assumption of all control of the Caspian. Within recent years, however, we, for the first time, see Russian and French gun-boats coming into the Persian Gulf. Russian, German, and French Consuls have been appointed to various posts. Subsidised Russian steamers now carry on a not lucrative trade in the Persian Gulf, and they are subsidised to a very heavy extent indeed. Russia sends so-called medical missions to Bushire and Bandar Abbas. Recesses of the coast of the Persian Gulf are examined, presumably with the idea of finding a convenient port; and Arabic leaflets vilifying British power are oftentimes disseminated among the tribes. With regard to what has occurred in Persia itself, the most serious assault made on the independence of Persia is, I suppose, that of the Russian loans. As your Lordships will remember, we refused to take up the loans that Persia asked for. We lost our opportunity. Russia stepped in and has advanced the money. By so doing she has put herself practically in the position of complete ascendency over the Persian Government. She has her, so far as I can see, in the hollow of her hand. The only one factor, perhaps, favourable to our interests in this respect is that these loans are secured upon the Customs of Persia, and, by an agreement made two years previous to the first Russian loan, Persia pledged herself to us that the Customs of Southern Persia, including the Gulf, should not be hypothecated to any foreign Power. But, as I understand it, Russia has only exempted from the action of these loans the ports in the Persian Gulf in the Province of Fars, and, I believe, the town of Mohammera. This is one of the particular cases in which I would ask the noble Marquess whether he could lay any Papers on the Table of the House to explain more clearly the situation.

In 1890 Russia also secured a Protocol giving her power to have full control of any railways that might be built. Here, again, we are saved, to a certain extent, by an earlier understanding that no railways were to be constructed in Southern Persia except with our consent; but I do not think the public are fully enlightened on this point and I would ask the noble Marquess whether he could lay any Papers on the Table with regard to it. In addition to these two main grounds of ascendency that Russia has acquired, I may also refer to the Persian-Cossack force that exists in

Persia, officered entirely by Russian officers, and the commandant of which is under the immediate orders of the Minister for War in Russia. The men of the force are removed from the ordinary jurisdiction of the Persian Government, and there is a special department to inquire into any cases that may arise between them and Persians outside the force. These men, after they have acquired a full knowledge of their duties, are drafted into the country and become the bodyguard of the provincial governors. Russia has also established a bank, which is practically a branch of the Bank of Russia. This Bank, unlike the British Imperial Bank of Persia, which has to pay a subsidy of £5,000 a year, pays no subsidy whatever to the Persian Government. Of course, Russia has built roads. She has the use of telegraphs, whilst we divide with Persia the cost of the upkeep of the telegraph line between Teheran and Meshed, and which Russia uses without any such obligation. One other very important point is that Russia has framed a tariff entirely to suit herself and her own commercial conditions. That tariff has operated most adversely to our trade, particularly our British - Indian trade. In addition to Russia having done her best to hamper a trade that has been opened up from Beluchistan to Seistan, a cordon of plague officials has been doing everything to interfere with the free access of merchandise coming from India, and they have done this in defiance of all customary International usage. Russia crushes every *bonâ-fide* effort made for the industrial and material improvement of Persia. Even the extra revenue which has been collected under the new Belgian system, owing to the more business-like methods of the Belgian Customs officials, has been no good to the country of Persia nor to the inhabitants or merchants. This increase of revenue only goes to give improved security for the Russian loan, and anything further goes into the pocket of the Shah for his own individual expenses. The enumeration of these many proofs of Russian enterprise show, what great control she exercises in Persia.

I would now refer to what is the actual trade of Russia with Persia. The statement that we must prevent any foreign Power coming into the Persian Gulf was met with the retort that Russia must have an outlet in the Southern sea. That implies trade compression, but Russia has no trade whatever in Southern Persia. Whatever trade she has even in Northern Persia is due solely to the heavy system of premiums she has originated, and there is no idea of Russia being restricted or hampered in any legitimate trade that is at present in existence. There is no necessity for this so-called outlet for trade, a though, according to our very excellent policy of allowing Free Trade to the world in any place that we may secure, we should never view with jealousy the establishment by Russia of branches of trade in the Gulf or in Southern Persia. But there is no case to be made out for Russia having her own port in the Persian Gulf. Her only object for an outlet there can be to secure a naval base, and that naval base could only have one object—that of threatening our trade in the Southern Sea. If we allowed a foreign Power to have access to a port in the Persian Gulf it would seriously damage our Imperial interests. First of all, it would certainly be damaging to our prestige in the East. I think that any idea of a foreign Power having a port in the Persian Gulf or in Southern Persia would at once create most serious alarm among all those millions of people that we govern in India, and it would be almost impossible for us to continue to hold large provinces, as we do now, with a mere handful of whites. We should inevitably have to strengthen not only our garrisons, and all those who hold authority in such provinces, but also our Navy. And how would it affect the strategic position? I contend that Persia at the present day and the Persian Gulf practically form a part of the Indian Frontier, and if so it is evident that if we allow a footing to be obtained by a foreign Power that frontier is gone to a very great extent. We have spent millions and we have had countless wars in putting the North-west Frontier of India in a strong defensive position, but if we allow a foreign Power in the Persian Gulf that position is practically turned and we have an enemy outflanking us. The moment we have a foreign Power acting in the Persian Gulf we at once make a great break in that long defensive position that, extending from the English Channel to India and the Far East, includes Gibraltar, Malta, Egypt, Aden. We have there an unrivalled defensive position; but if we allow another Power to plant itself down in the Persian Gulf that position is broken.

It may be argued that in case of war the Suez Canal would be closed to our trade, but even then we would have the enemy on our flank as regards our Indian trade, though, of course, operating at a greater distance. It must be remembered that India is almost equidistant between Australia and South Africa, and does form a practical base to our Colonial Dependencies. In recent years India has sent troops to China, to South Africa, and to Somaliland, and we cannot look upon India, therefore, as a mere separate entity, but must regard it as one of the most important bases we have in our world-wide defensive position. Captain Mahan has stated that—

> "A concession in the Persian Gulf by arrangement or neglect of local commercial interests, which now underlie political and military control, will imperil Great Britain's naval situation in the Further East, her political position in India, her commercial interests in both, and the Imperial tie between herself and Australasia."

That is Captain Mahan's summing up of the position if we allow a foreign Power to assert itself in the Persian Gulf or in Southern Persia. There is one other aspect of the case to which Captain Mahan has referred—I mean the commercial aspect of our position in the Persian Gulf. As regards merely our commercial interests I do not imagine for a moment that one would be willing to undertake any serious policy, but I regard it as essential for our political position that we should look after our commercial interests. I do not see how we can maintain naval ascendency in the Gulf, and yet not have certain interests on land. It is certain that naval strength, without a certain amount of territorial control or influence is really a most inferior weapon. But, indeed, our trade in the Gulf is not small, and is absolutely paramount. To all practical purposes no other Power has any trade there at all, except in a slight degree. Mesopotamia, if only there was good government there, would be one of the richest tracts in the world. The Babylonia of ancient history, it was the centre of the world's civilisation. Lord Percy, who has travelled there, has stated that it is one of the future granaries of the world. We cannot, therefore, afford to neglect entirely our interests in those parts.

Although the Government have not supported our commercial interests as largely as one would like, still they cannot be accused of neglecting them altogether. There is one point, however, to which I think attention ought to be turned. I refer to the consular service in those parts. As I understand, the Vice-Consuls in the Persian Gulf are appointed by the Indian Government, and are paid by the Foreign Office, but they do not report to the Minister at Teheran. Then there is a political resident in Bushire, who, I believe, is entirely in the pay of the India Office. Again, at Baghdad, there is a political agent who reports direct to Constantinople, and who is also in the pay of the India Office. You see, my Lords, it is a very complex system. One matter has been reported to me as being strikingly unjust. These Vice-Consuls in the Gulf, who are appointed by the India Office but paid by the Foreign Office, ought to be promoted to the rank of Consul. For two or three years they have been put down on the Estimates as receiving £660 a year, but they are only paid £350. This is accounted for by the fact that the Foreign Office will not raise them to the rank of Consul, as they have not been appointed by the Foreign Office. The question did once engage the attention of a House of Commons Committee in 1870. At that time the House of Commons Committee reported that they thought it advisable that all the consular officials should be appointed by the Indian Government, but it has never been carried out, nor has the other recommendation that the £12,000 which the Indian Government pays towards the Legations at Teheran and elsewhere should be decreased, been acted upon. I mention this point because I contend that in a part of the world where our relations are most critical it is highly essential that our Consular service should be thoroughly efficient. As far as I can gather, however, there is jealousy between the two Departments of State—the India Office and the Foreign Office—in this matter, and it is very hard on these Vice-Consuls. They are put to great expense, they have very delicate duties to perform, they are not allowed to trade, as Vice-Consuls are in other parts of the world, and it seems very unjust to these men that they should be deprived of practically half the salary that is due to them. Money that has been voted by Parliament is not paid to them on account of this friction which exists between the two Departments.

I do not propose to refer more to this, except to say, generally, that our traders do complain that they are not given proper security. Take, for instance, the Karun River. When we got powers to navigate that river the Persian Government threw every obstacle in the way of the proper working of the river, and it is only recently that proper facilities have been given to our traders in respect to its navigation. Again, take the Tigris. The Company that are there engaged are only allowed two vessels. They have cargo enough for four or more, but by some old firman they are supposed to be debarred from the right of having more than two vessels on the Tigris. When disputes arise there is no jurisdiction by which these disputes can be settled, except by reference to Teheran, which means considerable delay, if not total obstruction. It seems to me essential that if we are to retain our naval position we must have it based on a proper consideration of what we are doing on the mainland, and whilst I would not wish for a moment that we should acquire a single square yard of Persian or Turkish territory for our own uses, still it is necessary to maintain that we should have full control over all means of communication.

It may be asked whether it is not the cry of the mere alarmist to lay such stress on this question of a naval port being acquired by a foreign Power. I can only point to recent facts and to the activity of Russia in Southern Persia as betokening some determination to acquire access to the coast. We have also very nearly found ourselves with a German system established at Koweyt. We have borne the burden of giving protection and peace in that region, and at least we have the strongest claim to be recognised. One thing we cannot tolerate is, that by a fictitious *status quo* we should have our position whittled away until nothing remains but the mere husk of what should be the true strength of our position in Persia. It is no use our always saying we respect the integrity of the country if nothing is actually done to maintain the *status quo*. For instance, Lord Cranborne stated, I think, in February last, that no great changes had taken place during the last twelve months. I could point to three changes that have taken place. In the first place, Russia has made another loan to Persia of about a million; secondly, she has entered into a commercial treaty with Persia and framed that tariff which is so very hostile to our interests. In the third place, Belgian Custom House officials have been appointed to, and are exercising their duties in, the Gulf ports. Are these changes nothing? What security have our people that our position is really going to be maintained? Anyone who reads Lord Curzon's book on Persia, or Mr. Whigham's book, or the remarkable series of articles that have appeared in *The Times*, must see how seriously at stake are our interests. I admit my views are second-hand, but they are, in addition to the authors I have mentioned, founded on the observations of travellers, traders, correspondents, and even of officials. My fears cannot be represented as imaginary. At the same time I do not wish to accuse the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of neglecting our interests. From questions that have been asked in the other House I understand that negotiations are at the present time proceeding with Persia and Russia in respect to our position, and I think this ought to be a very favourable time for coming to an understanding with Russia. Russia was hostile to the Baghdad Railway scheme that has been dropped, and therefore it may be assumed that she would be more ready to come into some form of agreement with us with regard to our respective positions in that part of the world. It must be remembered, too, that we have had no real treaty hitherto with Russia respecting the integrity of Persia. The only understanding ever arrived at was in 1834, when Russia expressed a pious desire that the integrity and independence of Persia should be preserved. But nothing since that date has really been advanced to put Persia in an independent position. I feel so seriously the gravity of the situation that I regret that someone abler than myself has not marshalled the facts, and brought them forward in a way more calculated to bring conviction to your Lordships. I do contend that no shirking responsibility at the present time will do us any good. If we desire the integrity of Persia and to secure our position we must take active steps. The real danger is that by neglect, by mere drifting, by reluctance to face the position, we may get into a situation from which war alone can extricate us. If, having decided what should be our policy, we announce it in a firm declaration, we would be far more likely to preserve ourselves from any such untoward consequence. At present we see Russian activity encroaching on the foreshore of our position, and crumbling away those protections that nature has given us, and perhaps soon, when the very foundations of our position are exposed, then, under circumstances far less favourable to ourselves, we shall be forced to engage in some costly conflict to save a mere remnant of that which now, by frank declaration, supported by a far-seeing, consistent policy, we might save in its entirety. I feel that there should be some decision arrived at by our Statesmen, by our diplomats, by our naval and military experts, by our Indian officials, and, perhaps, by some of our colonies, who are not unconcerned in this matter, as to what is the irreducible minimum that we must demand for the safety of our position.

*Lord ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, when I first saw the communication from Herr Gwinner, of the Deutsche Bank, which appeared in *The Times* of April 22nd, I at once concluded that *The Times* had been hoaxed. For I could not believe that any foreign financier would have dreamt that any portion of the British public would be so foolish as to advance money for the purpose of establishing a naval base belonging to a foreign Power in the Persian Gulf. Although the scheme brought forward for the construction of the Baghdad Railway is at present laid aside, still we shall always have schemes of a kaleidoscopic nature before us until it is constructed. In the last scheme laid before us the money for the railway was to be found by the public of many nations, and their interest was to be paid out of receipts which, for some years, will be problematical, backed by a Turkish guarantee, which is not a first-class security. In these circumstances I doubt very much if capitalists will come forward. But we must bear in mind that at any moment the German Government may come to the conclusion that it is necessary to German interests that the railway should be made, and that they may add a German guarantee to back up that given by Turkey. In that case the money would be found, and the margin of expense that would fall on the German Government would probably not be very great, as it would undoubtedly put severe pressure on Turkey to obtain the payment of its share of the guarantee. Then, again, the capital disbursed in constructing the railway would be largely spent on German steel industries, and on salaries to German engineers and German surveyors. So that even if the railway, as a railway, was a failure, it would not be a total loss to Germany. Besides, Turkey wants railways for concentrating and supplying her troops. She found the use of them in her recent war with Greece. Though I would rather that this railway should not be made, still I think it more than probable that it will eventually be constructed, and if it is built it should be made by us in conjunction with Germany in an amicable manner, so as not to infringe upon our position in the East. We ought to have a proper control over the Baghdad end of the line, and then we could leave Germany a free hand over the western portion of the railway.

If this railway is constructed it is absolutely necessary that the control of the whole of the Persian Gulf be not only claimed by us but acknowledged by others. We have put down piracy in the Gulf for generations, and have, in consequence, a claim on its coasts prior to that of any other European nation. The presence of a naval arsenal in the Persian Gulf in the hands of a great Power would be a menace not only to our trade with India and China, but also to that of Australasia. Before Lord Curzon became Viceroy of India he expressed himself in no doubtful language on this point, when he declared that—

> "He would regard the concession to Russia of a port in the Persian Gulf as a wanton rupture of the *status quo*, as an international provocation to war, and he would impeach the British Minister who was guilty of such acquiescence as a traitor to his country."

Are not these words equally applicable to the cession of a port in the Persian Gulf to any other Power? I would sooner see Russia at Constantinople than I would see a European arsenal on the shores of the Persian Gulf. Since the Crimean War, not only the boundaries of countries, but the distribution of their populations have undergone many changes, and the centres of power and the political weight of nations have been completely altered. Questions connected with the ownership of the shores of the Hellespont and the Bosphorus are now only a secondary consideration to Great Britain and France. They are, however, of primary importance to Austria and Germany. These questions have ceased to be Anglo-French, and have now become Teutonic. I see no reason why these two countries should not seek to defend their interests by means of Anatolian railways and by building fortified bridges across the Bosphorus if they wish to do so. That is a very different thing from putting themselves in a position to attack us in India. The strategical position will also be affected, not only in the Eastern Seas, but also in the Mediterranean. There is an article in the proposed agreement giving the railway company privileges in connection with railways approaching the Mediterranean between Messina and Tripoli. Thus any men-of-war on friendly terms with the managers, would be able, if in that neighbourhood, to replenish their stores and ammunition, and to complete their *personnel* from the Persian Gulf as well as from Smyrna and the Bosphorus. A ship short of torpedoes, or with damaged electrical apparatus, would find herself very much nearer to the Persian Gulf than to Portsmouth or Kiel. The Gulf will be about three days rail from Messina or Tripoli.

Then if the Suez Canal, or traffic in the Mediterranean, is interfered with the friendliness of the management may decide the question of the command of the sea; and if military stores are wanted by any Power in Egypt, or in its neighbourhood, it may make all the difference in the world as to which belligerent the managers of the railway might be disposed to favour. From our experience in the Transvaal we know what an important part can be played by a hostile railway. Now we cannot be certain as to how the management will behave, whether as a friend or as an enemy, or with strict neutrality. But if we have a firm hold of the other end of the line, we can, at any rate, make certain that its unfriendliness will not expose us to the risks that I have referred to. It is generally assumed that as Koweyt is ours we can stop the railway by refusing to allow it to be made use of as a terminus. There are, however, other possible termini in the Persian Gulf. If we refuse Koweyt, a claim may be made to make use of the creek of Khor Abdallah. This is not as convenient a place as Koweyt, as it is surrounded by marshes; but the Arabs have learnt how to drain swamps for the purpose of growing date palms. If time and pecuniary encouragement were given to them it would greatly lessen the engineering work that would have to be done when the railway reached Zobeir. There is also what looks like a possible terminus in Persian territory. Khor Musa is a salt-water inlet, and a safe anchorage, but according to the Admiralty charts it has only been partially surveyed. The charts do not show clearly how far the deep water extends, nor how near it is to firm land. For various reasons I am inclined to think that our Hydrographical Department has done its duty, and is in possession of further information that it has not thought proper to publish. I do not know to what extent the questions connected with the Baghdad Railway have been studied by the Naval Intelligence Department. If by any chance that Department is undermanned and has too much of its time taken up by routine duties, I would point out that there are about fifty junior captains on the half-pay list unemployed, and that most of them are fully competent to work out in detail all the nautical, commercial, and strategical problems that may arise in connection with the proposed railway, whether in the Persian Gulf, in the Mediterranean, or in other seas.

In conclusion, I would remark that as we have the advantage of having our foreign affairs in the hands of a former Viceroy of India, and as we also have the advantage of having as Viceroy of India a statesman who has qualified himself for that post by a careful study of the countries that border on our Indian frontiers, I have full confidence that they will come to a right decision in these matters, whether they give any information or not. At the same time, I think that the noble Lord has done right in calling attention to the subject, as the more it is brought before the public from the British point of view, the less likely are we to be asked for impossible concessions by foreign financiers or foreign statesmen, for concessions which neither the interests of Great Britain, the opinions of its inhabitants, nor the common sense of our statesmen will permit us to grant.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble Lord who introduced this subject explained to the House that, for reasons which he gave us, it was not his intention to deal at length with the earlier part of the Notice which he had placed upon the Paper. I shall follow his example, and take up very little of your Lordships' time in referring to it. I am, however, bound to make one or two remarks in consequence of what has fallen from the two noble Lords; and before I do so I wish to point out to the noble Lord who spoke first that he, like a good many other people, is under a misapprehension when he conceives negotiations have been passing between His Majesty's Government and the promoters of the Baghdad Railway Company. There have been no negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the promoters of the Baghdad Railway Company, any more than there have been negotiations between His Majesty's Government and any foreign Government on this subject. What has taken place is this. There were confidential communications — negotiations if you like to call them so—between His Majesty's Government and certain representatives of the great financial houses in this country, with the object of ascertaining whether the conditions upon which this enterprise was being undertaken were of a kind which would permit His Majesty's Government to offer it any encouragement whatever. Those negotiations, as the noble Lord told the House, are no longer in progress.

The noble Lord expressed a hope that I might be able to give to your Lordships some Papers relating to them. To that proposal I must give an unhesitating negative. For that I will give your Lordships reasons which I think you will consider sufficient. In the first place, as these communications are no longer proceeding, it is clearly not necessary that these Papers should be supplied to the noble Lord for any public purpose. If we had been, in his opinion, upon a dangerous incline, likely to lead us to any of those unfortunate results which he so eloquently described, if he had desired to arrest our progress by calling attention to the documents, there might be some reason for requiring their production; but that is not the case. There is another reason, which weighs even more strongly with me. These communications were, as I said just now, of the most confidential character. Now I am under the impression that the occasions upon which the British Government finds itself in such confidential communication with the representatives of that great organism which we are in the habit of describing as the City, are of rare occurrence—probably much rarer in this country than in any other country in the world. But I do say that when those occasions arise, and when those confidential communications take place, it should be on the clearest possible understanding that the confidence which is given and received is respected from beginning to end; and I think we should ill requite the manner in which the gentlemen to whom I have referred have approached this question if we were to offer any encouragement to the idea that we should lay before Parliament or in any way give to the public the documents, or the purport of the conversations, that passed between us.

There is one other observation which I feel impelled to make on this subject. I make it in fairness to the persons to whom I have just now referred. It is this—that I am deeply convinced that throughout these discussions their object was not only to ascertain from us whether they could expect at our hands any encouragement for the project in which they were interested, but also to ascertain from us whether anything which they were doing or leaving undone was detrimental to the interests of this country. If both those considerations had been present to their minds, and they had had to choose between the two, I unhesitatingly express my view that they would have allowed the latter consideration to prevail. With regard to the enterprise to which reference was made by the two noble Lords I wish to say very little about it; but, as this Notice has been for some time on the Paper, I can scarcely pass it over without any mention at all. Let me, in the first place, remind your Lordships that this scheme for a railway to connect the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf is not a new idea by any means. I do not think I am wrong in saying that for sixty years or more the idea has been familiar to the people of this country. I happened to read the other day an account of a deputation received by Lord Palmerston on the subject. It may interest your Lordships to know that Lord Palmerston expressed himself as follows in regard to it. He said—

> "The Government was fully alive to the importance of the Euphrates route. They had given it support, and would continue to support it; but he could not give an opinion as to a guarantee without reference to his colleagues."

Later there was a House of Commons Committee, presided over by Sir Stafford Northcote, which reported in favour of a scheme which apparently contemplated an expenditure of ten millions of British money upon it. In its Report the Committee said that amongst the advantages to be expected from the construction of the line were the more rapid transmission of mails, the possession of an alternative and more rapid route for the conveyance of troops, and the great commercial advantage, both to England and India, which the opening up of the route would confer; and the Committee thought it worth the while of the British Government to make an effort to secure those advantages, considering the moderate pecuniary risk which they would incur.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: What was the date of that?

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: 1872. Now, my Lords, far be it from me to suggest that because those views prevailed at that time therefore they should be received without question at this moment. But I do suggest that, considering the manner in which this Baghdad Railway project has been received in past years in this country, His Majesty's Government could scarcely on this occasion have afforded to brush contemptuously on one side consideration of the proposals that were made. There was no moment, I believe, in the history of the question, when the British public would have regarded it with feelings of indifference. Now, what was the situation with which His Majesty's Government found themselves confronted? The noble Lord, toward the end of his interesting speech, expressed the opinion that we had very nearly found ourselves with a German system established at Koweyt. That shows how completely the noble Lord has misunderstood the position which His Majesty's Government assumed in regard to this question. What was the situation of fact with which we had to deal? There is in existence a German railway pure and simple, the Anatolian Railway, stretching from a point not far from Constantinople to Konia. That was one fact. The other fact was that a German company had been offered a concession under which it was open to them to extend this German railway from Konia to the Persian Gulf. Now, at no moment did we contemplate, did we ever discuss, the possibility of giving our adhesion, or giving any support whatever, to any project of that kind; and, therefore, when the noble Lord suggests that we contemplated the arrival of a German system at Koweyt he entirely misapprehends the ideas that were present to our mind. What was under our consideration was the possibility of obtaining the substitution for this purely German system of a line of an international character, constructed under guarantees which would have secured permanently its international character, and which would have secured for the commerce of all nations absolutely free and equal treatment from sea to sea. That was a very different proposal, surely, from the proposal to bring a German railway to the Persian Gulf; and it was also part of the proposals which were ventilated, that this country should be given full equality with any other power in respect of the construction of the line and in respect of its maintenance and control after it had been constructed. I therefore do not apologise for setting the noble Lord right on a point with regard to which he, like many other critics, has, I think, fallen into a serious misapprehension. At any rate I suggest to your Lordships that we might have been very severely taken to task if we had absolutely refused to discuss proposals of this nature, which at one time certainly seemed to point to a solution, which, I venture to think, might have been proved to be a prudent and statesmanlike solution of the difficulty.

I do not feel justified in taking up your Lordships' time further with regard to the Baghdad Railway project. I now pass to the closely connected subject of the Persian Gulf. I feel sure that the noble Lord's interest in the Baghdad Railway scheme was because he felt it did closely affect our interests in the Persian Gulf. I do not yield to the noble Lord in the interest which I take in the Persian Gulf, or in the feeling that this country stands, with regard to the navigation of the Persian Gulf, in a position different from that of any other Power. The noble Lord told your Lordships, with absolute truth, that it was owing to British enterprise, to the expenditure of British lives and money, that the Persian Gulf is at this moment open to the navigation of the world. It was our ships that cleared those waters of pirates; it was we who put down the slave trade; it was we who buoyed and beaconed those intricate waters. Well, at this moment, out of a total trade in the Gulf Ports of £3,600,000—the figures are those for 1901; we have none later—£2,300,000 represents the commerce of this country; so that it is clear that up to the present, at all events, we have succeeded in preserving a liberal share of that commerce. But there is no doubt that in the Gulf, as in other parts of Persia, we are feeling very keenly the competition of other Powers. That, I am afraid, is our fate not only in Persian waters; nor can we expect, because we have been, in the development of commerce throughout the world, the pioneers of that form of civilisation, that we shall always be able to maintain the position of superiority which we at first enjoyed.

The noble Lord asked me for a statement of our policy with regard to the Persian Gulf. I think I can give him one in a few simple words. It seems to me that our policy should be directed in the first place to protect and promote British trade in those waters. In the next place I do not think that he suggests, or that we should suggest, that those efforts should be directed towards the exclusion of the legitimate trade of other Powers. In the third place—I say it without hesitation—we should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal. I say that in no minatory spirit, because, so far as I am aware, no proposals are on foot for the establishment of a foreign naval base in the Persian Gulf. I at least have heard of none; and I cannot help thinking that the noble Lord waxed almost unnecessarily warm at the idea of such a foreign intrusion, with which, so far as I am aware, we are not at present threatened. Well, the noble Lord then touched upon a series of points connected with our commercial interests in the Gulf.

LORD LAMINGTON: As supporting our political position.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: It is impossible, to my mind, to dissociate our commercial and our political interests.

LORD LAMINGTON: I agree.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I will take the navigation of the Karun river. That was opened in 1888. I was in India at the time, and I well remember the satisfaction with which Sir Drummond Wolff's achievement on that occasion in procuring the opening of the river to navigation was regarded both in India and at home. The trade of the Karun, although it has not increased, perhaps, as much as might have been anticipated, has increased considerably; and the lion's share of it is ours. I see that in 1897 the trade was only £26,000, whereas in 1900 it had risen to over £100,000. The noble Lord spoke of the difficulties encountered by our traders owing to the

Customs arrangements on the Karun. I do not know whether I quite followed what he said on the subject, but I may tell your Lordships that the position is this. We were originally led by the Persian Government to expect that three Customs Houses would be maintained on the Karun, one at Mohammera, the second at Ahwaz, and the third at Shuster. It appears that lately the Persian Customs authorities determined to do away with inland Custom Houses, and consequently two of these were threatened with suppression. Well, persons interested in Persian trade naturally protested. It was a great inconvenience to them that goods destined for one of the upper ports should have to be taken out of the ship's hold at Mohammera and there examined. Representations were made to the Persian Government; and I am glad to say that the result has been that temporary arrangements have been made, or are about to be made, under which our traders will be given Customs facilities at these three ports as was originally intended.

The whole question of our commercial relations with Persia is at this moment engaging our most attentive consideration, and particularly that question of the Customs tariff upon which the noble Lord laid so much stress. The Customs tariff was, as your Lordships will recollect, lately revised; and I think the noble Lord is justified in saying that that revision was not to the interest of British commerce. But I am inclined to think that the apprehensions which were felt on this point were somewhat exaggerated. I was relieved when I read the other day an account of the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, at which a Member of Parliament, Mr. Emmott, made the following statement—

> "The new tariff in regard to cotton goods had been carefully examined by Manchester merchants, who did not think it injured them. It was not preferential as regards Russia, and they did not believe the tariff would turn out to be any higher than previously."

That may be a sanguine estimate; but it shows, at any rate, that some of the alarm felt was greater than the circumstances justified. The particular commodity which is most seriously affected by the new tariff is tea, and your Lordships probably know that there is a large trade in tea between India and Persia. But here, again, I find that the Persian tea duties, when examined, are not very much larger than those which are imposed on tea in this country; and therefore I am not sure that we can protest very loudly on that point. Where I think the noble Lord has most right to complain upon this question is as to this point. As matters now stand, all we can demand at the hands of the Persian Government is most-favoured-nation treatment; and that, of course, we have got under the revised tariff. But we all know it is not very difficult so to adjust a tariff that, while it is in appearance equal in its operation with regard to all the Powers concerned, it really in effect discriminates against some of them. And therefore I for one am not satisfied that this country should have to be content merely with most-favoured-nation treatment at the hands of Persia. That matter is the subject of negotiation at this moment; and I have every hope that we shall be able to bring about an arrangement under which, instead of accepting tariff arrangements made between Persia and other Powers without reference to the effect of those arrangements upon us, we should be in a position to have arrangements of our own which will give us the right of insisting that, whenever Persia again attempts to touch her tariff, British interests shall be specially considered.

The noble Lord said a few words with regard to railways in Persia. I believe it is an open secret that a few years ago Persia undertook to defer the construction of any railways at all for a term of years. We were not parties to that arrangement, nor did we contract any obligations under it. The position in which we stand is this—that, whenever railway construction takes place in Persia, we have a right to construct, or procure the construction of railways in the southern part of that country. Persia will then be opened, not only to the capital and enterprise of other countries, but to the capital and enterprise of this country as well; and, though that arrangement may not be recorded in any very formal manner, we are satisfied that it is a binding engagement on the part of the Persian Government, and we should certainly maintain that that is its character. Closely connected with the subject of railways is the subject of roads. As to that, there is a road between Teheran and Sultanabad which was built by the

Imperial Bank of Persia—a British institution. There is also a caravan road between Ispahan and Ahwaz, which was built by Messrs. Lynch, a firm who have an honourable reputation for the enterprise they have exhibited in developing trade in Persia. Besides that, there are concessions for the extension of the Teheran-Sultanabad road to the Karun river, and also for joining Kom with Ispahan, and at this moment negotiations are in progress for the speedy construction of one of those two roads. This is a matter of considerable importance, because it will give road communication from the capital to a point on the Karun river, thus bringing Teheran into communication with the Karun navigation.

In the matter of telegraphs, there is a convention, which was entered into last year, under which a British line is being constructed from Teheran to the frontiers of India by the staff of the Indo-European Telegraphs Department under the Government of India. The line will be leased by the Persian Government to the Indo-European Telegraphs Department; it will be maintained by a British director and staff, and 140 miles of it have already been constructed under the conditions I have described. I have mentioned these points, which are points of comparative detail, to tht House because I think they show that British interests have not entirely passed out of existence in Persia, and that some progress has been made in maintaining them during the last few years. The noble Lord dwelt sadly upon the Russian loan to Persia. It is quite true that in 1900 the Persian Government secured a loan of about two millions sterling from the Russian Bank upon conditions of a somewhat onerous and inconvenient character. But I think the noble Lord was in error when he said that was due to the fact that we had refused to make any advance to the Persian Government. On the contrary, it was well known by the Persian Government at that time that we were willing to give them assistance; but for reasons of their own they preferred dealing with the Russian Government, with the result which we know.

The only other point on which I need say a word is the question of the position of the Consular service in Persia. As to that, I am bound to say that my impression is that the Consular service has for some years past been undermanned in point of numbers, and also insufficiently equipped in point of that special knowledge which members of the Consular service in remote countries like Persia should possess. Both of these aspects of the case have been dealt with, and I am able to tell the noble Lord that a considerable number of additional appointments have been made during the last two years. In 1900 a Vice-Consulate was created at Bandar Abbas. In the same year a Vice-Consulate was created at Seistan, and this post was raised to a Consulate last year. In 1900, again, we sent a Political Agent to reside at Bahrein. In 1902 a Consular Attaché was appointed at Shiraz; the Consulate at Ispahan was raised to a Consulate-General with an increased salary attached to it, and the salary of the Consul-General at Tabriz was also increased. Those are all improvements in the position of the Consular service; and we are at this moment in consultation with the Government of India as to a proposal to raise the Vice-Consulate at Mohammera to a Consulate, to establish a Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz under Mohammera, to raise the native agency at Kermanshah to a Vice-Consulate, and also to establish a Vice-Consulate at Shiraz.

With regard to the other branch of the question—I mean the question of the training of these officers—two proposals are under examination. One is to the effect that a certain number of Persian studentships should be created to form part of the Levant Consular service. The alternative is that we should create a separate Consular service in Persia. Those proposals are being examined; and I hope that before long I shall be able to announce to the noble Lord that we have chosen one or other of these means for giving our Consular representatives in Persia that special knowledge which, under the present system, they have, perhaps, not sufficient opportunities of acquiring. I have said enough, I think, to show that we are not indifferent to the matters which the noble Lord has brought before the House. If there have been changes of late, I believe those changes have been, on the whole, in the direction of the assertion and the protection of

British interests. As time goes on I hope that we may be able to make further progress in the same direction, and that, if the noble Lord returns to the charge, as I daresay he will at some future time, I may be able to report to him that we have been able to take still further means in the direction which he has so much at heart.

LORD NEWTON: I have no particular desire to prolong this discussion, but I cannot help commenting upon what seems to me one unsatisfactory feature. My noble friend has raised a most important question, and the condition of these benches testifies to the apathy with which this question is regarded. There are three ex-Viceroys of India who habitually sit on the benches opposite, but not one of them thinks it necessary to say a word on this subject. I desire warmly to congratulate my noble friend on having elicited from the Foreign Secretary a definite statement, not a statement couched in the vague commonplaces to which we are more or less accustomed, but a statement of great and almost historical importance. The Foreign Secretary has put it on record that His Majesty's Government will regard the acquisition of a naval port in the Persian Gulf as a grave menace to this country, and that such action will be resisted to the utmost of our power. I welcome that statement for this reason—that it always appears to me that the besetting sin of British diplomacy is that, first of all, we are not clear in our own minds as to what we want, and, in the second place, we rarely define what our interests are, and it is not therefore surprising that other countries should be unaware of what we consider to be our interests. In this case, however, there can be no mistake. The noble Marquess has made a most important statement, which I venture to think will go a considerable distance to clear the air and prevent many potential difficulties which might have arisen had a vaguer and more unsatisfactory statement been made. At the same time I should like to re-echo the hope which the noble Marquess expressed that the subject may be recurred to, and, when it is recurred to, the audience may be one of a more numerous, and, I think I might almost say, of a more representative character.

LORD LAMINGTON: The noble Marquess did not answer the point with regard to the case of the Vice-Consuls who were put down in the Estimates as receiving £660 a year, but who only receive £350 because they are not promoted to the position of Consuls.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I shall be very glad to inquire into the matter, but I am not able to give an answer at present.

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN HARRISON.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I beg to ask his Majesty's Government whether they have now conferred with the Colonial Office regarding the case brought before their notice in this House last year of Captain Harrison of the ss. "Grecian," who successfully appealed in this country against the suspension of her certificate in Canada but who was required to pay the cost, of this Appeal; if so, what has been the result of the conference, and also whether there is now a probability of Captain Harrison being recouped the costs referred to.

LORD WOLVERTON: I am afraid I have nothing further to add to the reply of my noble friend, Lord Dudley, in August last,† but I entirely associate myself with the sympathetic nature of that reply. I find that a letter was sent to the Canadian Government calling attention to the circumstances, and, as no reply has been received, a further communication will be addressed to them on the subject.

THE LOADING PORT CLAUSE IN SHIPS' ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the latest circular issued by the Board of Trade to the superintendents of their Mercantile Marine Offices, relative to what is known as the loading port clause in ships' articles of agreement; and to ask whether, in view of a legal descision given in the Thames Police Court, they now propose to withdraw the circular in question, owing to its liability to give seamen a false impression and to cause shipowners great inconvenience and expense. For the information of your Lordships I would state that the loading port clause in a ship's agreement is a clause whereby her crew agree to proceed from the port of final discharge of the ship's cargo to the port where she commences to load. For instance, supposing a vessel completes the discharge of her cargo at, say, Hull, the crew have agreed to proceed in her to her loading port, say, Cardiff, where a new crew can be shipped. This loading port clause has never been really objected to by seamen, and it greatly facilitated the movements of British ships, inasmuch as, if the crew were to leave at the port of discharge that would necessitate shipowners employing men known as "runners" for the passage to the loading port at much greater expense, involving travelling expenses to and from the different ports, etc. The circular referred to is one which, to the great indignation of shipowners, appears to have been voluntarily issued by the Board of Trade, advising their superintendents of Mercantile Marine offices that, should they be asked at the port of final discharge of cargo whether the crew can be legally compelled to go to the loading port, they should advise that they cannot; in other words, incite the crew to break their legal agreement. The natural consequence was that shipowners began to experience grave difficulties, owing to their crews, encouraged by the Board of Trade in this way, refusing to carry out a perfectly fair contract on their own part and requiring to be paid off at the port of discharge. This promised to be very serious for shipowners, but the matter was fortunately brought to a head by the master of the ss. "Blenheim," whose crew, acting upon the statements in the Board of Trade circular, demanded that they should be paid off at Shadwell Basin, London, without proceeding to the ship's loading port in the Bristol Channel. The master refused to accept the terms of the Board of Trade circular, and he was summoned by the crew in the Thames Police Court for payment of their wages. The magistrate said that—

---

† See (4) *Debates*, cxii., 390.

> "The voyage was stated with reasonable precision and the sailors had due notice of the engagement they were undertaking. There was no suggestion that it was an unfair stipulation. The voyage was to be completed at the loading port, and he found therefore that the voyage under the agreement did end there. That was to be the final port of destination; the termination of the engagement was to be there and there the wages were to be paid. For those reasons he dismissed the summonses."

This decision therefore, legally, overrules the Board of Trade circular, which should have been promptly withdrawn in the interests of ship owners. If it remains in force it will lead the crews into a false idea as to the legality of their demands, and if it is decided to continue the circular there should also be attached to it, for the protection of all concerned, a copy of the magistrate's decision which I have quoted. I may mention that the effect of the loading port clause circular is directly to encourage the shipment of aliens in our Mercantile Marine. Under the terms of this circular Consuls at Continental ports are requiring captains to pay off their British crews on arrival, leaving them no option but to engage foreigners in their places on the vessel's next sailing. Having regard to the fact that the Board of Trade have recently appointed a Committee of Inquiry into the causes which have led to the increase of the number of foreigners in the Mercantile Marine their action seems most inconsistent.

LORD WOLVERTON: The noble Lord does not say anything about aliens in his Question.

LORD MUSKERRY: I was simply pointing out that that would be the effect of the circular, and that that was the way in which it would affect British ships and British masters abroad. I shall be glad to learn that the Board of Trade will take sensible action and withdraw a circular which has caused, and will cause, a considerable friction with crews, and involve shipowners in serious and needless expense.

LORD WOLVERTON: I think my noble friend is quite reasonable in asking this Question, and I trust I shall be able to remove any doubts he has on the subject. The circular to which he refers involves no new departure or reversal of policy on the part of the Board of Trade. The loading port clause has been in use for many years, and has been a source of continual trouble with the men, and until the recent decision of the Police Magistrate referred to, we know of no case in which owners have been able to obtain a decision in its favour. On the other hand, we have several decisions to the effect that the voyage ends at the final port of discharge. The circular was issued in order to secure uniformity of practice on the parts of the superintendents. The idea was that superintendents were not to act on their own discretion, but ought to have something in their hands from head-quarters to guide them. The legal question which has arisen with regard to it is now before the Law Officers of the Crown, and when their opinion is received the matter will be further considered. I am sure the noble Lord will recognise that I cannot give him any answer on the subject of aliens, as he did not mention that matter in his Question.

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 5th May, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has been complied with, viz. :—

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 66 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 66 has not been complied with, viz. :—

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill. Read the third time and passed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No.2) Bill. As amended, considered; Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas). Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cudworth, Hucknall-under-Huthwaite, and Meltham, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7). Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the counties of East Sussex and Leicester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8). Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Auckland, Shildon, and Willington, the Croydon and Wimbledon, the Tarvin, Malpas, and Tarporley, and the Windsor and Egham Joint Hospital Districts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barry, Fenton, Leeds, and

Tonbridge, and the Ports of Hartlepool and Manchester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cudworth, Hucknall-under-Huthwaite, and Meltham," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 177.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the counties of East Sussex and Leicester," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 178.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8, Bill). "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Auckland, Shildon, and Willington, the Croydon and Wimbledon, the Tarvin, Malpas, and Tarporley, and the Windsor and Egham Joint Hospital Districts," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 179.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barry, Fenton, Leeds, and Tonbridge, and the Ports of Hartlepool and Manchester," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 180.)

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).

Sir JOHN BRUNNER reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills; That the parties promoting the Crystal Palace and District Gas Bill had stated that the evidence of Professor Vivian Byam Lewes, of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Professor Vivian Byam Lewes do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at Eleven of the Clock.

Ordered, That Professor Vivian Byam Lewes do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills To-morrow, at Eleven of the Clock.

London United Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Public Offices (Dublin) Bill with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Arthur Elliot.*)

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Select Committee—

"That, in the case of the Romford and District Tramways Bill, Petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

Resolution agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for conferring further powers upon the company of proprietors of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Navigation; and for other purposes." (Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to regulate the capital of the South Wales Mineral Railway Company; and for other purposes." (South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Milford Docks Company; and for other purposes." (Milford Docks Bill [Lords].)

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to abolish the rate now levyable for certain church purposes in the parish of All Saints, Poplar, in the county of London, and to make other provisions for securing the stipend of the Rector of All

Saints, Poplar; and for other purposes." (All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition), Bill [Lords].)

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for reviving and extending the period limited by the Knott End Railway Act, 1898, for the compulsory purchase of lands, and for extending the period limited by that Act for the construction of the railway by that Act authorised; and for other purposes." (Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].)

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

That they concur with the Commons in their Resolution, "That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [Lords]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [Lords]; Milford Docks Bill [Lords]; All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition), Bill [Lords]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Hyde Corporation Bill; New Hunstanton Improvement Bill. Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bill, with Amendments.

Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

Mr. NICOL reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday next, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bonville's Court; Batley West End; Clifton; Wollaton; South Kirkby; Wharncliffe Woodmoor; Monk Bretton; Biddulph; Cheadle; Forfield; Blackheath; Rowley Regis; North Staveley; Ackton Hall; Bromley Pit; New Duffryn; Tynewydd; Caerphilly; Larkhall; and Newton Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Chorley; and Gloucester; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Forfar; and Alva; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Wandsworth; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Two Petitions from Aberdeen, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Greenock; and Clackmannanshire; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Penryn, against: to lie upon the Table.

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PORT OF LONDON BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Workington; and Jarrow; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Edinburgh; Glasgow; and Greenock; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions for alteration of law: from Warrington; Bradford; and Chorley; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bonville's Court; Batley West End; Clifton; Wollaton; South Kirkby; Wharncliffe Woodmoor; Monk Bretton; Biddulph; Cheadle; Forfield; Blackheath; Rowley; North Staveley; Ackton Hall; Bromley Pit; Elsecar; Hickleton Main; New Duffryn; Tynewydd; Caerphilly; Larkhall; and Newton Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS, VOLUME II. (NEW SERIES).

Paper [communicated 4th May] to be printed. (No. 143.)

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report No. 383 (Bermuda, Annual Report for 1902) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (CANTEENS, &c.).

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee on Canteens and Regimental Institutes [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL NAVY (RETIRED OFFICERS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 8th April; *Sir John Colomb*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 144.)

TREATY SERIES (No. 7, 1903)

Copy presented, of International Convention relative to Bounties on Sugar. Signed at Brussels, 5th March, 1902. Ratifications deposited at Brussels, 18th June, 1902, to 1st February, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 3, 1903).

Copy presented, of Report by Mr. A. Whyte on his recent Travels along the Sea-Coast Belt of the British East Africa Protectorate [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES AND PROFITS IN COAL MINING.

Copy ordered, "of Tables showing for the United Kingdom, and the principal Coal Mining Districts, the quantity and value of Coal produced, and the number and average Wages of Coal Miners in the years 1901 and 1902, respectively, together with the estimated amounts expended on Miners' Wages, and remaining for other expenses and Coalowners' Profits in the United Kingdom in each year; with Explanatory Memorandum (in the same form, and with the same particulars, as Parliamentary Paper, No. 179, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Address for "Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1903–4, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

TRADE DISPUTES ARBITRATION BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday read and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Motor Cars on Public Highways—Speed Regulations.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if in any Bill dealing with the registration and speed of motor-cars he will take into consideration the desirability of preventing vehicles being propelled at a high speed on the roads provided for foot passengers and ordinary traffic, and the imposition of a high minimum penalty for breaches of the law; and the imposition of a special licence varying with the rate of speed at which such vehicles can be propelled on the public roads.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am preparing a Bill on this subject, and the points referred to in the Question will receive my consideration in connection with it.

Civil Service Examinations -Successful Candidates Offering Shorthand.

Mr. GEORGE BROWN (Edinburgh, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how many candidates passed the Civil Service examinations in 1902 as clerks of the second division and as female typists in Government departments respectively; and how many of the successful candidates of each class offered shorthand as one of their subjects.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Elliot.*)—Only one competition for the Second Division was held in 1902. At this 100 candidates were successful, and of these forty-six offered shorthand. There were also, in the course of the year, eleven men promoted from lower grades to the Second Division, but none of these offered the subject. As regards female typists twelve fresh appointments were made in 1902, but in no case was shorthand prescribed by the nominating department.

The National Debt.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount of the fixed charge (of £23,000,000) was, in the year ending 31st March 1903, applied to cost of management, interest on debt, and sinking fund, respectively, dividing the last item into the amounts due to the terminable annuities which were at first suspended and subsequently allowed to continue, to the other terminable annuities including life annuities, and to the new sinking fund; and what were the corresponding figures for 1899–1900 and the estimated corresponding figures for 1903–4.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The comparative figures are shown in the following Table:—

	1899–1900.	1902–3.	Estimate 1903–4
	£	£	£
1. Management - - - -	174,864	180,144	186,000
2. Interest - - - - -	17,023,399	17,069,665	20,213,809
3. Sinking Fund—			
(*a*) Terminable Annuities of which the capital portion was suspended in 1900–01 and 1901–2 - - - -	4,651,874	4,564,444	3,922,420
(*b*) Life Annuities and other Terminable Annuities - -	1,129,987	1,112,203	1,123,726
(*c*) New Sinking Fund - -	19,876	73,544	1,554,045
Total Sinking Fund -	5,801,737	5,750,191	6,600,191
Total - - - -	23,000,000	23,000,000	27,000,000

China—Opium Tax.

Mr. HENRY WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Government of the province of Canton last year, with a view to meeting its share of the indemnities imposed upon China, instituted an additional tax upon opium, both native-grown and imported, which was in operation for about two months; that in September last the British Consul at Canton remonstrated against this additional tax on the ground that it was inconsistent with the treaty obligations of China, and that it was in consequence discontinued; whether the Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs has sanctioned this action of the Consul, having regard to Clause 5 of the additional article to the Chefoo Convention, signed in London in 1885, which provides for further taxation on imported opium, subject only to the condition that such taxation equally applies to the Native drug.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) An attempt was made last year to levy an additional tax upon opium. Under the prescribed conditions this could only have operated so as to discriminate in favour of Native opium. But it was also in violation of Clause 2 of the additional article of the Chefoo Convention, because it was to be levied at the port and while the packages were still unopened for consumption, in which case the amount of the tax is by the clause specifically limited. His Majesty's Minister at Peking and His Majesty's Consul-General at Canton, acting under the instructions of His Majesty's Government, protested against the tax, and the new regulations were withdrawn.

Edge Hill Station (L. and N.W. Railway) Telegraphic Facilities.

MR. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will give facilities for the sending of postal telegrams from Edge Hill Station, on the London and North Western Railway.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I shall be happy to make inquiry on the subject, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Postal Telegrams to London.

MR. MARSHALL HALL: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will give instructions to the telegraph offices throughout the kingdom that telegrams addressed to the various postal districts, such as E.C., S.W., and E., shall be accepted and duly transmitted to London without the word London being necessarily added to the address.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The existing instructions provide that telegrams handed in at provincial offices for well-known streets or suburbs in London may be accepted without the word London appearing in the address. The senders of such telegrams are, however, strongly advised to include the word in the address in order to avoid risk of delay or non delivery, there being less liability to mistake or delay if the fuller address be given. It has to be borne in mind that Liverpool, as well as London, is divided into postal districts.

Listowel Poor Law Union.

COLONEL M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the Report recently issued by the auditor of the Local Government Board (Ireland) in regard to the Listowel Poor Law Union; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Report of the auditor is at present engaging the careful consideration of the Local Government Board.

Pay of Volunteer Sergeant Instructors.

MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of modifying Army Order 187 of 18th July, 1902, which limits the payments to sergeant instructors of Volunteer corps to £6 10s. per year per company.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Reports have recently been called for from the districts on the working of the regulations set forth in the Army Order mentioned, and the whole question will on their arrival be considered.

Agricultural Resources of the Transvaal —Colonel Thomas's Report.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the exact terms of the reference made to Colonel Owen Thomas, who was recently appointed to proceed to South Africa to report on the agricultural resources of the Transvaal; whether Colonel Thomas's Report has been received and will be laid upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) Colonel Owen Thomas has received no appointment from Government to report on the agricultural resources of the Transvaal.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Fiji—Poll Tax.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been directed to the levy of the poll tax in Fiji and its effects upon labour; and if he will take into consideration the expediency of raising revenue by means of other channels.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): There is no poll tax in Fiji. The whole system of native taxation in the group is at present receiving the close attention of the recently appointed Governor. On learning his views, I shall consider whether any, and, if so, what alterations are advisable.

Forced Labour on Fijian Roads.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will explain why Fijians, unaccused of crime, have been forced to labour on roads after having been compulsorily enlisted for military service only.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware that the Armed Native Constabulary of Fiji, to which I presume the hon. Member refers, have been employed in road-making. They have been employed in levelling and draining their parade ground, used by them also as their camp, and the land used as a parade ground for the Volunteers. I have suggested to the Governor that when employed on such work they should receive some form of additional pay or allowances, as is, I understand, allowed in the case of His Majesty's Regular Forces when required to perform such duties.

Native Regulations in Fiji.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will take steps to obtain from New Zealand a Report upon the Native regulations promulgated in Fiji.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware of any reason why a Report should be obtained from New Zealand upon the affairs of another colony.

Fijian Petition to the King.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the bearers of a petition signed by 20,000 Fijian Natives will be allowed to present it to His Majesty.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Any British subject may present a petition to His Majesty. The hon. Member is doubtless aware that the proper method of approaching the Crown with a petition from Fiji is through the Governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Deportation of Fijian Chiefs.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if Ordinance XX. of 1887 is still on the Statute-book of the Fiji Legislature, under which Fijian chiefs have been imprisoned and deported without trial and without any opportunity of being heard in their own defence; and, if so, will he consider the expediency of disallowing the said ordinance.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Ordinance referred to is still in force. As at present advised I am of opinion that it is necessary to retain the power of deportation.

Suva Bubonic Plague Hospital.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if a petition has been received from Suva protesting against the establishment of a bubonic plague hospital in the centre of the town; and, if so, will he explain why no reply has been returned.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: A letter was received in October, 1900, from the Warden of Suva, protesting, on behalf of the town and vicinity, against the establishment within the precincts of the town of an isolation camp in anticipation of an outbreak of plague for cases which could not be removed to the quarantine station. No case of plague ever occurred, and after some correspondence with the Governor (in the course of which it appeared that the matter had been amicably settled with the Town Board), a reply was returned in a despatch dated 1st February, 1901.

Corn Duty.

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will arrange that millers who hold stocks of imported grain, or the products thereof, on the 1st July, upon which duty has been paid by themselves or others, shall be allowed a refund of the duty.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am afraid there would be great difficulty about a refund of duty such as the hon. Member suggests. But I am very anxious to take every means of preventing hardship to the trade. I have therefore granted an unusually long period of notice, and given permission for the bonding of dutiable goods within that period. I have also instructed the Customs to make the operation of bonding easy and cheap in every possible way, and I propose, with the consent of the House, to remit on this occasion the ¼ per cent. warehousing charge. Other measures in this connection are also under consideration.

Regulation of Motor Car Traffic.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will take steps to place the law with respect to motor cars on a more satisfactory footing by removing the present hard-and-fast limit as to speed, subject to due security for the safety and convenience of other users of public roads, by requiring registration of the vehicles, and by enacting a high maximum penalty for breaches of these and any other conditions it may seem desirable to impose.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I have in preparation a Bill on this subject, and I hope shortly to be in a position to introduce it.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): Will it provide that numbers be affixed to motor cars, so that they can be readily identified?

MR. WALTER LONG: Really, the hon. Gentleman had better wait until the Bill is introduced. I am considering that point.

Mr. Henry A. B. Wallis, J.P.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if Mr. Henry A. B. Wallis, who adjudicated at Millstreet Petty Sessions on 27th April, was sworn in as a magistrate in the manner required by law; and if so, when, and by whom.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): In September, 1887, upon his appointment to the Commission. He was re-sworn in September, 1901, consequent on the demise of the Crown, before the local resident magistrate.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the destruction of official documents and records by the Royal Irish Constabulary authorities in Ireland; and, if so, whether he will state who authorised their destruction, and for what purpose they were destroyed.

MR. WYNDHAM: I replied to a similar Question on this subject yesterday.†

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total number of recruits for the Royal Irish Constabulary who were informed that recruiting for that force had recently ceased; what was the average period over which the applications of those recruits extended; and, whether it is proposed in future to confine recruiting for the Constabulary to men discharged from the Army Reserve.

MR. WYNDHAM: Eight hundred and eighty-five candidates for admission to the Constabulary were informed that recruiting was suspended. Their names were on the list for periods ranging from one month to seventeen months. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

---

† See page 1203.

Treatment of Emigrants at Londonderry.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to an investigation lately held at Londonderry with reference to the conduct of the collector of Customs at that port towards emigrants arriving there from America; whether he has any information showing that the number of passengers landing at Londonderry has decreased; and whether he is aware that at the close of the investigation the collector was reprimanded as to the manner in which he discharged his duties; and, if so, will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. RITCHIE: In consequence of a complaint which was made to them in January last as to the manner in which the examination of passengers' baggage was conducted at Londonderry, the Board of Customs caused inquiry to be made into the matter on the occasion of the annual inspection of the Port by one of their surveyors-general. As a result of the inquiry, it appeared that there was no adequate ground for the complaint. It is not true that the collector was "reprimanded as to the manner in which he discharged his duties." I have no information as to the alleged decrease in the number of passengers landing at Londonderry.

Irish Union Amalgamation.

MR. O'DOHERTY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has as yet appointed the Commission to inquire into the question of the amalgamation of workhouses in Ireland and Union Boundaries; and, if so, will he state the names of the Commissioners appointed, and when they purpose holding their sittings.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir, the Commission has not yet been formally appointed, but the warrant of appointment will, it is expected, be shortly issued. Until this has been done it would be unusual to announce the names of the members.

Irish School Teachers' Remuneration.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education have received complaints as to the financial loss inflicted on a number of teachers, whose schools had been increasing in attendance and improving in efficiency from year to year during the three years preceding 1900, and who, owing to the change in the mode of payment, receive less now than formerly; how many of these teachers have been awarded normal salary and how many refused; and what steps will be taken to remedy the alleged grievances of teachers in this respect.

MR. WYNDHAM: Representations were received by the Commissioners to the effect stated in the first part of the Question. Practically, all such representations were investigated, and in every case in which the Commissioners considered that an increased income, or a normal income, was equitably due, it was awarded. The number of such cases is not officially recorded.

Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board can state the number of cottages erected under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, in cases where compulsory powers were sought when applying for the Provisional Orders, and the number of cottages erected where the local authorities sought no compulsory powers when proceeding to put those Acts into force.

MR. WYNDHAM: The total number of cottages included in Provisional Orders which were either confirmed or made absolute was 19,541 on 31st March, 1902. Of these, the number included in Orders under which the sites were acquired by agreement was 289. In many cases, however, where compulsory powers are sought, it is believed that terms are subsequently arranged between the parties, thus rendering unnecessary the enforcement of compulsory powers. But the Board has no material that would enable it to say how many cottages were erected on sites acquired by agreement or taken compulsorily, as the case may be.

Sligo Asylum.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what action has been taken on the Reports of the Inspectors of Lunatics as to the state of Sligo Asylum; and what steps have been taken to carry out the resolutions of the Leitrim County Council and the Mohill Rural District Council to have the Leitrim Poor Law Unions amalgamated, and one of the workhouses thus dispensed with converted into an auxiliary asylum for the patients in excess of the authorised number at present detained in Sligo.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Asylum Committee has called for plans and specifications with a view to the reconstruction of the sanitary system of the asylum where defective. The question of union amalgamation will be referred to the Commission about to be appointed for the purpose of inquiring generally into this subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. SCHWANN: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the first Vote in Supply on Thursday will be the Post Office Vote?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): When Supply is next taken the first Vote will again be the Post Office Vote. I am sorry to hear that some doubt is entertained whether the Second Reading debate on the Irish Land Bill will be concluded today. It would be unfortunate if it were not concluded, as in that case the debate must go over till Thursday, a very inconvenient course. To-morrow afternoon has long been allocated to the consideration of the Transvaal loan. Such an arrangement as this would necessitate Supply being taken on Monday, and perhaps the Budget Resolution would then be taken on Tuesday. But I trust that some means may be found by which this contingency may be avoided. If not, I give notice that I shall change the Supply day from Thursday to the Monday following.

IRISH LAND BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question (4th May), "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I do not think it is any business of ours to find fault with any criticisms of this Bill that have come from British Members on either side of the House. I only hope that some of our good friends who sympathise with us as to the excessive price the landlords are to get, will not sympathise with us more than we sympathise with ourselves until we know precisely what terms the landlords are to receive. I think it is due that we should at once acknowledge the fairness and friendliness of the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition, following as he did in the footsteps of the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs. In the earlier and still more delicate stage of these negotiations there may have been circumstances that would be a temptation to make party capital out of the present situation in Ireland, and we could not have found fault with human nature if there had been some yielding to it, but I join with my hon. friend the Member for East Mayo in the hope that the Liberal and Radical Party, following the generous example of their leaders, will have the chivalry and statesmanship to see in the present situation something higher than mere party capital, something which will hereafter reflect credit and lustre on the principles to which they have adhered with so much fortitude.

And I hope the Government and the right hon. Gentleman opposite will have the glory of passing a Bill which, if it be only adequately amended, as it can be easily and safely, may bring to the Irish people blessing and emancipation that we Irishmen, with our unlucky history, almost shrink from calculating upon with too much sanguineness.

It is, I hope, a good omen for the Bill that the only serious complaint that came from the British taxpayer in the course of yesterday's debate was a complaint that will be re-echoed just as seriously by the Irish taxpayer and the Irish tenant, and that is the retention of a minimum price in Clause 1. I submit that the sum and substance of yesterday's debate is that these limitations will have to go, and that nobody will be a sufferer when they are gone. I hope we are not wrong in construing the professions of the Attorney-General, of an open mind, and his somewhat perfunctory defence—if I may be allowed so to describe it—of the minimum price as an admission on his part that that minimum price is absolutely indefensible. It is indefensible from the point of view of the Irish tenant because for him it is compulsion pure and simple —a compulsion that will weigh most heavily on the poorest part of the population. It is indefensible from the point of view of the British taxpayer because it would be mere midsummer madness to have an extravagant price, such as twenty-eight years purchase, established as the tenant purchase price even as a legal possibility. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General defended this minimum price on two grounds. First there was the suggestion of oppression of some kind by the tenants as against landlords. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have abandoned that ground almost as soon as he had stated it, as a downright absurdity, considering that there is no shadow of compulsion on the landlord to sell at all under any circumstances. The second ground, as far as I recollect it, was the desirability of securing uniformity of price. That is equally absurd, because, we know, the almost infinite variety of the value of holdings and estates in different parts of Ireland, and the certainty that it is the poor and not the rich tenants who would be the sufferers. The Attorney-General, unconsciously, I am sure, but still somewhat ungenerously, attempted to account for the limitations in Clause 1 by a reference to the terms of the Land Conference Report, the inclusion of which, he might have explained, was the means of preventing the break up of the settlement which is the foundation of this whole Bill. The right hon. Gentleman omitted to mention to the House that Lord Dunraven's Committee, including all the landlords' representatives at the Land Conference, have since, upon more mature consideration, passed a resolution practically recognising that these limitations cannot be maintained, and recommending that the Estates Commission should have the power of dispensing with them altogether at their discretion. So that here we have an absolute agreement among the best friends of the Bill on this point. You have the British taxpayer insisting on the abolition of the minimum price for his own protection, and you have the Irish tenant also insisting on it for his own protection, while you have the majority of the Irish landlords making no objection whatever. I earnestly ask the Chief Secretary why, in Heaven's name, he should not at once recognise the fact and drop this minimum price altogether out of the Bill right away? By doing so he would spread relief and joy throughout Ireland, and, I believe, in England as well; he would remove the last substantial reason for disquiet in the mind of the British taxpayer, and he would, practically speaking, satisfy the principal demand of the Irish people; for the amendment would ensure a practically unanimous vote on the Second Reading, and would remove the most formidable obstacle to the success of the Bill. He would, at the same time, make the tenant's bargain a bargain that would be safe for himself, and, safe for the State.

I beg the House not to be frightened by the demands of the Irish representatives changes in the Bill. The Amendments for we shall have to press in Committee will be found to resolve themselves into provisions for securing, in the first place, that the tenant shall be absolutely free to make his own bargain, and, in the next place, that he shall not be obliged to pay a larger price for his land than has been paid by purchasers in the open market during the last fifteen years under the Ashbourne Act. The whole basis of the Land Conference was that whatever extra compensation was necessary to induce the landlords to sell should be supplied by the State, in whose supposed interest landlordism was created, and in whose real interest it is now about to be abolished. On the other hand, the tenants should not, under the pretence of offering a boon or favour to the landlords, be obliged to pay three or four additional years purchase above their 80,000 neighbours who have purchased under the Acts of 1885 and 1891. I venture to say that that is a moderate claim, and is just as essential for the safety of the State as for the safety of the tenant. It has been pointed out already that under the restrictions in Clause 1 and in Clause 17 the tenant's power of bargaining is very seriously, if not fatally, crippled. In the fourth Section of Clause 5 the tenant's power of making his own bargain is practically destroyed, and as one effect of all these restrictions the tenants will have to pay. Instead of receiving any relief from their present burdens, they will have imposed upon them an additional three or four years purchase over and above that paid by their neighbours, who have already purchased. All I can say is, that it might very easily happen that we would be driven to say, "You might as well spare yourself the pains of passing this Bill if you insist on these restrictions." But this difficulty is an exceedingly small one, as will be seen the moment it is boldly tackled. So far as this Bill has had a successful initiation up to the present, you owe it to the fact that you have followed the advice of united Ireland in its construction, and in so far as it may be a failure, your failure will arise from your not having adopted that advice in all its bearings. I think it will be found that, on almost all the Amendments which the Irish Members will have to press upon the House, there is substantial agreement among all parties in Ireland that they are vital to the successful working of the measure. Of something like sixteen Amendments which I had the honour of proposing and carrying at the Nationalist Conference in Dublin, it is a literal fact that, as to the organisation which represents the majority of the landlords in Ireland, they have not objected to a single one of them, and even the Landlords' Convention have only objected to one. So you have the amazing and unexampled prospect that, practically speaking, all the Amendments to be proposed in Committee on this Bill will, with one exception, be non-contentious, so far as either party in Ireland is concerned. The secret of the tremendous strength of the Bill is that for the first time in the history of Ireland the State will have the landlords and tenants of Ireland in one boat, for both the landlords and tenants of Ireland are so much at one as to what is required, that it seems almost impossible to conceive of any one, except perhaps, *ex officio*, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having any interest in obstructing any kind of Amendment proposed; and even as to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we all recognise that he has displayed a broad and generous spirit in dealing with this transaction in somewhat difficult circumstances. But the pecuniary risk in this Bill is so small, and the gain to the Empire so tremendous, that, if we were carrying on this debate in better times and in the normal state of the money market, the House would not hesitate a minute in doing the extremely little that is necessary to make the settlement complete and effective.

For the first time in your history you have the chance of a settlement that will protect every race, every class, and every creed in Ireland. More than that, I believe that Englishmen have begun to realise that the sacrifices which the British taxpayer will be called upon to make are a pure figment of the imagination, and one that was perhaps a little irritating to Irish feeling, considering the extent to which Irishmen and not Englishmen are called upon to make sacrifices in order to ensure this settlement. I acknowledge that the State credit is a consideration of great magnitude, but that credit is secure, and otherwise the financial arrangements of this Bill are purely an Irish affair, involving purely Irish money. If there is to be any complaint that an excessive ransom is paid in connection with the abolition of landlordism, that complaint ought to come from Ireland alone, because every pound that the landlords will receive will eventually come out of Irish pockets, and, heavy as is the price we have to pay, all we ask is to be free to devote our own money to what we believe will be a beneficent settlement, instead of having it devoted to your present wasteful and corrupt Imperial expenditure in Ireland. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that what British Members have principally to concern themselves with is whether it is possible to come to a great national settlement which would mean peace and prosperity for Ireland. If it is possible, then you will find that the matters which will have to be threshed out in Committee although of vital importance to Ireland, are matters with which Englishmen need concern themselves very little. I go further, and say that if you are satisfied the result will be agrarian peace and good-will in Ireland, every Englishman, Scotchman, and Welshman has just as deep an interest as we have, in seeing that the bargain shall be completely satisfactory, and one which will enable the people to feel confident that in the future they will be free from obligations which might very easily depress them. Let me give one illustration to show how little need there is for alarm at the demands of Ireland. The foremost resolution passed at the Dublin Convention demanded that the evicted tenants should be restored to their homes frankly and without exception—that one section should not be restored and another section left on the road-side—as something like one third of them would be under Clause 2 of this Bill. That, as my hon. friend for East Mayo pointed out last night, would cost next to nothing except good-will, but it would be worth millions of money in the pacification of Ireland. It may, perhaps, be thought that this is a small and sentimental question. The same thing might have been said, if, in the first year of the war in South Africa, you had been offered peace on the sole condition of handing over one man in the British ranks to the vengeance of your enemies. But it would not have been done. Rather would you have fought to the last man. Neither will the Irish people, for any human consideration, give up one of the men whom they are accustomed to call the wounded soldiers of the campaign. But there is no real difficulty about the matter on one side or the other. The landlords have had at least as many wounded men in the land war as the Nationalists. These wounded landlords, who only two months ago were at least as hopeless and broken in their fortunes as any of the evicted tenants, will under this Bill be new men, solvent men, comparatively rich men. The Irish people do not envy them their good fortune. Their representatives have not hesitated to recommend that the provision for the wounded landlords shall be a large and generous one, and I am glad to say that the generosity has not been all on one side. Lord Dunraven's Committee proves that the mass of the intelligent landlords of Ireland—the men whose courage and foresight has made this settlement possible—will, I am satisfied, tell the Government as straightly as I do, that the cost of making a complete settlement of the evicted tenants question will be small. To leave it unsettled, or only half settled, would be to leave everything unsettled and to keep up a state of fermentation that might easily enough be fatal to the satisfactory working of the whole of the vast national settlement contemplated by the Bill. That is the first and the most passionate of the Amendments demanded by the National Convention, and in the interests of British Members in this House I hope it will be carefully and completely complied with.

The only other question is as to the miserably inadequate provision made for the congested districts. As to them, I am certain that when we come to deal with them in Committee we shall secure assent from both sides of the House to our proposition that the machinery of the present Bill is miserably inadequate in this respect. Even when adequately amended, the Bill, it must be understood, can settle nothing except the agrarian question, although it may open the way to other settlements. The hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent required from us some pledges of finality. So far as I know, there is no such word as "finality" known in the history of the British Constitution. There is no such thing as finality for us in this world until we are settled in our graves. What we do say, without *arrière pensée* is that we recognise in the generous scope and framework of this Bill a hope and potency, and a promise such as no human being could have conceived twelve months ago, of ending once for all the land war and class war in Ireland. And what we do say to you is, that it will be no fault of the Irish people or of their representative in this House, if that promise is not realised in its fulness. If some of the English Members who were present at the National Convention in Dublin were here they would probably tell you that there was something in the conduct of that assembly, consisting of nearly 2,500 delegates—that there was a spirit of generosity and moderation, and a determination to brush aside and put down any mere suggestion of rancour or of passion—which, if English statesmen were only wise, they would consider one of the most extraordinary consummations that all your money could not buy and that all the armed force of coercion could not have accomplished. Up to the present the English Press and Gentlemen in this House have had rather a fatal knack of misunderstanding all that occurs in Ireland. It is quite natural. I daresay they know as much about us as we know about you. This time, for the first time, apparently the English Press and the English people have begun to realise the real forces and the real currents of life in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has commenced to reduce the force of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and as I sat at that Convention I could not help thinking that if the Chief Secretary had visited it he might have come without a police escort. At that Convention he would have found the materials for a standing army of law and order which might very easily indeed have relieved him from any uneasiness about diminishing the standing army of idle mercenaries through whom you have hitherto governed Ireland, to our misery and to your cost. The hon. Member for Stoke last night said that this Bill was about to be given to a disaffected and disloyal people. Why, Mr. Speaker, the most important feature of that Convention is that it represented the Irish difficulty in all its strength and intensity, not the moderators, but the very elements, and the very men, who are the hearts' blood of disaffection in Ireland. In this, as in all the astonishing things that have occurred in the last six months, the Chief Secretary and his Government occupy a position of advantage which, unless in the case of Mr. Gladstone's great and glorious experiment, no English statesman has ever enjoyed before, and that is that you are dealing directly with the disaffected masses of the people themselves, and that you are proceeding upon the principle of attempting to conciliate and to content the people, instead of the old vicious plan of buying off a few Parliamentary leaders to desert the people. I would venture to lay some stress on that fact, because I am satisfied that if Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen could only appreciate the spirit of that Convention, and all that it might mean for the future relations between these two countries, they would learn more than if we were to go on debating this Bill for weeks.

I would earnestly entreat the Government and this House not to misunderstand the friendliness of that Convention, or of those who, at some risk of misunderstanding and misrepresentation, laboured to increase that friendliness. If you were to do so you might easily indeed create a feeling in consequence of which we could no longer answer for our countrymen as we can answer for them now. The lesson you have lodged most deeply in the Irish minds is that whatever instalments of justice we have ever won, have been wrung from you by an uncompromising and implacable fight, and not by any effort of conciliation. [Mr. WYNDHAM indicated dissent.] The Chief Secretary shakes his head, but I am sorry to say the records are too numerous and too crushing to the contrary. Any forbearance on our part has always up to the present been treated as a sign of weakness. Whenever our people have remained quiet it has been considered safe to despise and trample on them. The Irish people and their representatives have been induced to take a different attitude owing to the unique circumstances of the present position, owing, in the first place, to the fact that we are proceeding upon a basis of common agreement with the landlords of Ireland, and owing also to the promise of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself, to give loyal effect to that agreement so far as possible. My hon. friend and leader the Member for Waterford, and some of his colleagues, have taken the heavy responsibility of advising our people to look rather for points of agreement than for points of antagonism, and to take up a friendly attitude towards this Bill, with the view to smoothing the way for Amendments, instead of a nagging or irreconcilable attitude which might make Amendments impossible. We have taken the not inconsiderable risk of telling our people that their moderation would not be misconstrued and would not be traded upon in the House of Commons. I may, candidly speaking, say that we did not do so without painful searchings of heart, remembering the history of our country, and, however unpopular some of us may personally be in this House, I would earnestly and strenuously ask the House not to dishonour the draft that we have dared to draw on the capacity of this House for not misunderstanding our position. There are enemies of this Bill who are watching to catch you in a blunder. We do not consider that good faith on our part is credulity. We are satisfied that in any eventuality the Irish cause will not suffer by our having done our honest best in this matter. There is no use disguising the fact that if you were to read the proceedings of the Dublin Convention as meaning that the Irish people are satisfied, or will be satisfied, with this Bill as it stands, and that you are safe in rejecting the Amendments which the Irish people have asked you to pass, then you may possibly pass the Bill, but it would have the fate of all your other unfortunate measures; you would have lost a great opportunity of establishing in the Irish mind a belief in the good faith of England, and you would perhaps find—you would certainly find—that it will be a question for this House between accepting those Amendments now, when they would mean complete satisfaction and contentment, and accepting them in an amending Land Bill in a few years to come, when all the bloom will be gone. God forbid that any evil prophecy of that kind should be realised. I quite agree with the Leader of the Opposition that this Bill will be either made, or to a large extent marred, by what is done in relation to the Amendments. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman, whose good intentions in this matter are transparently sincere, will in his eventful speech to-night give any indication of what the fate of the Bill may be in Committee, but all I can say is, that when we go into these discussions, if the two great English Parties in this House—and I appeal to both of them—only rise superior to the making of party capital, if you in this House only imitate the extraordinary spectacle of union among all classes and parties which is to be witnessed at the present moment in Ireland—a union which is standing the test of time—all I can say is that you will have nothing to fear, and you will have nothing to lose. You will have more, than any Member of this House can yet estimate, to gain, if you boldly give effect to the advice that both landlords and tenants in Ireland have united to give you, and if, for the first time in your history, the peaceful and friendly demands of united Ireland are ratified by a united England.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): Of course I feel and recognise that the concern of the hon. Member who has just sat down, and of his friends, for the fate of this Bill, the hopes and fears with which they regard it are more deep and searching than those which are felt elsewhere. But my attitude towards the Bill at this stage—I say at this stage advisedly—will be much the same as that of the hon. Member for Cork. I agree with him entirely as to the natural human temptation to make party capital out of the Bill. It is a Bill which offers great opportunities in that respect. I believe with him that those opportunities ought to be forgotten, and the temptation ought to be resisted. True, the Liberal Party has suffered, in my opinion greatly suffered, in past years from attempts to make party capital, especially out of the Irish Land Question, but that Ireland has suffered still more. On all those of us who supported Mr. Gladstone in his efforts for the conciliation of Ireland, and the solution of that question, there remains, and will ever remain, a special obligation to do our utmost to put party interests aside, and to spare no pains to understand, whether it be on land or any other question, the Irish point of view, and no efforts to support that view whenever we believe it to be in the public interest. I freely admit I desire to support this Bill; and my object at this stage is to give it a helping hand. It is not a Bill which, by its own naked provisions, rouses enthusiasm. My desire to support the Bill comes from the spirit in which the people of Ireland have approached the Bill, and from the spirit in which the Government have introduced it. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, in moving the rejection of the Bill, evidently had his thoughts carried back to 1886, and compared the letter of this Bill with the letter of Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill of 1886. My thoughts have also been carried back to the Bill of 1886, not by comparing with it the letter or the text of this Bill, but carried back by the speeches of the right hon. the Chief Secretary and of the First Lord of the Treasury. It is not by the letter but by the spirit that I am reminded of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. It would be an insult, after what fell from the First Lord of the Treasury yesterday, to suppose for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman's particular objections to Mr. Gladstone's proposals, either as to the Government of Ireland or to Irish land, are in the least modified at the present day. I see no evidence from what I have read of the utterances of the right hon. Gentleman or his Government that their opinions are altered; but the spirit in which they approach this question in the Bill before the House is altered. It seems to be the same spirit which was felt to be such a new departure in Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1886. What is that spirit? It is the penetrating consciousness of the difference between Irish and English problems, an abiding sense of the harshness and pathos of Irish history, and a real sense of the present difficulties and grievances in Irish affairs; and from these considerations spring that spirit of sympathy and chivalry in approaching Irish affairs which we have lately observed in the speeches of the Chief Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury. That I believe to be the spirit which is underlying this Bill.

Now, the last seventeen years, I think, have left us certain convictions, and there are certain lessons to be drawn from them. One of these convictions is that you will never be able to turn your back upon Irish problems until you have advanced very much beyond the present stage. The next is that, though the Irish problem may present itself in various forms sometimes education, sometimes land, sometimes general questions of Irish government — we have got to approach it whenever and in whatsoever form it does present itself, in the spirit, the same spirit as has been lately shown on the Benches opposite, and as was shown by Mr. Gladstone. And the third is that we must work in that spirit. That is why I welcome this Bill and I shall address myself to its consideration in the spirit which underlies it. I defer to a subsequent stage criticism of its details. Let us take the principle of the Bill. I recognise, however, that a real objection on principle has been raised to the Bill by the hon. Gentleman who moved and seconded its rejection. This objection represents the extreme Unionist view of the Bill. I see the Chief Secretary shaking his head; but I would remind him that what is extreme is not typical. That extreme view, as I understand it, is that Ireland is not merely a part of the British Empire but also part of England; that the differences between Irish and English conditions are no more than the differences between town and country in England; and that you cannot consider the poverty or the social problems in Ireland without at once considering at the same time the poverty and the social problems in England. That, I understand to be in the mind of the two hon. Gentlemen. They say. "Why should we deal with the social problems in Ireland and not in England, when we have the same problems in England?" This Bill has, I believe, been put forward without any prejudice whatever, and can be discussed and passed without any prejudice whatever, to the discussion of social problems in England. What I understand the spirit of the Bill on this point to be, is that it is necessary to give a separate and special treatment to the problems in Ireland; but that is no prejudice to dealing with any English questions. And if there is a prejudice likely to arise in regard to the sympathetic treatment of these questions in England, I should say that the severe and unbending attitude of the hon. Member for Stoke is a bad augury for dealing not only with Irish questions sympathetically, but for dealing with questions at home sympathetically. In dealing with Ireland, then, you must have a plan to give these questions separate and special treatment, and not mix them up with English questions.

In the next place, taking an extreme view of the Bill, it is said that there are no special needs in Ireland needing special treatment. That is an argument always supported by a reference to Irish prosperity and the statistics of the savings banks. But the figures of the savings banks do not dispose of the Irish difficulty. I am quite sure that any one who has been through Irish controversies as long as I have been, must realise how perfectly hopeless it is to approach Irish questions in the spirit of an accountant, for that is what it comes to. I differ entirely from that point of view. The Irish question has been an enormous embarrassment to politicians, all because some men believe that because Ireland is more prosperous, or quiet, the embarrassment and trouble of the Irish question is passing. I think British electors and Members of Parliament have said that often enough now, to be quite sure that it is not true. Now, can any Government bring Ireland into the same relations and the same attitude of mind towards the central Government as the other parts of the Empire? Would not such a consummation be the greatest possible triumph to the British Government and the greatest relief to national affairs? I remember the time when it was fashionable with Members on the other side to say that the settlement of the Land Question would mean the end of political agitation in Ireland. I have never shared that view; but I do admit that the Land Question is a very great element in the social conditions in Ireland, and the political conditions, too. I do not believe that by settling the Land Question you will get a complete political settlement. I would infinitely prefer to see a political settlement, but, short of that, I believe the economic settlement of the land will be a most valuable asset to Ireland and to us. We hear of agreements between landlord and tenant, and the hon. Member for Waterford laid great stress on the unanimity of that sentiment, even in the proposed Amendments to the Bill. If anyone takes a cheap and superficial view of the matter he can say it is not hard for two parties to be unanimous on the subject of getting money from the public funds. But is that all the Irish landlords and tenantry are unanimous about? They are unanimous also about the desirability of a great transfer of property from one class to another in Ireland, of great alteration in the condition and status of the tenants; and I do believe it is a fair statement to say that underlying the unanimity is a sense of weariness of the struggle, and that the attraction which has brought landlords and tenants together is the prospect of peace and good feeling and a sense of common citizenship. Is that not an interest which, from the British point of view, it is our interest to promote? Do we owe no responsibility for the trouble in Ireland? The position in regard to Irish land has long been an impossible one; and I think in the main, it is due partly to the ignorance, and partly to the inadequacy of British legislation. I hold that some development on the lines of this Bill is an inevitable consequence of the Land Purchase Acts. If the hon. Members who moved and seconded the Amendment supported the Ashbourne Acts, they have their share of the responsibility for the introduction of the present Bill. Surely no one can have listened to the speech of the First Lord without realising how much ignorance of Englishmen in regard to Irish history has had to do with the present position. It was years, indeed generations, before people on this side came to understand that the English and Irish land systems were different. For generations British Administrations and British legislation went on the assumption that the two systems were similar. That was believed in all good faith, but the result was bound to be injustice in Ireland, and incalculable misery and neglect in our relations with Ireland.

We are told that this Bill is unpopular. Remedies for past mistakes are not apt to be popular; and remedies for grievances not felt on our side of the water are not apt to be popular. But either this Government, or any other Government that succeeds it, will have to go on until these difficulties are got over, and will have to be prepared to face unpopularity, or else cease to be responsible for the government of Ireland, or, if they pay any attention to the condition of Ireland, they will have to do real violence to their own consciences in the matter by doing nothing. That is why I welcomed the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury last evening. I admit it dealt mainly with Irish land, and that we have no right to draw from it any inference with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's attitude on affairs in Ireland other than the land. But, with regard to the land, the right hon. Gentleman has nailed his colours to the mast. He explained more powerfully than I can, the differences in the English and the Irish land systems. He dwelt upon these differences in a most striking and emphatic way; and he concluded by saying that the peculiarities of the Irish land system had been such as to naturally foster the sentiment of co-ownership. I take special note of that word "naturally." I take it, it means that if the First Lord of the Treasury or any one of us had been an Irish tenant we should naturally have acquired the sentiment of the co-ownership of the land. If only an understanding of that fact had been worked into other days! It is but a little way back in history since an English Prime Minister—if he was not Prime Minister at the time he was Prime Minister more than once—laid it down that tenant-right in Ireland was landlord wrong. I am quite aware that that was said from the Liberal side of the House; and I imagine it represented the opinions of both parties at that time. It was to Mr. Gladstone's great honour that he made the Liberal Party, at any rate, understand the injustice of the Irish land system. Now we have a Conservative Prime Minister stating that the peculiarities of the Irish land system naturally foster the sentiment of co-ownership, which is the exact opposite of the statement that tenant-right was landlord wrong. I am not surprised that the Irish Members take note of such a tremendous advance in progress, and I believe that the hon. Member for Cork is right in saying that progress has been made in the consideration of the Irish land question not by one side alone, but by the House of Commons generally.

There is one more difference which I might add to the differences mentioned by the First Lord of the Treasury yesterday as existing between the Irish and the English land systems. The right hon. Gentleman said that Irish land was not a marketable commodity, whereas English land was. That is true; but there is something else remarkable about Irish land as distinguished from English land. That is that Irish land from the point of view of the purchase of ownership has had very little marketable value, whereas in regard to letting to tenants it has had a monopoly value. Some go so far as to say that land which has no marketable value has yet a monopoly value. If that is so, it is one of the most remarkable differences between the Irish and English land systems, and needs special care in dealing with the Land Question in Ireland. Among the other things regarding which we must be on our guard, there is the possibility of monopoly value being offered for Irish land by the occupiers. Surely if the price is to be based on monopoly value we are working on an insecure foundation. Let us see how we stand with regard to the Irish Land Question at this moment. First of all, we did not recognise tenant-rights as the sentiment of co-ownership. Then came the Act of 1870, which legalised the principle provided other people were prepared to recognise it; but in the Act of 1881 that principle was imposed. It is easy to complain of the Act of 1881; and I understood the First Lord of the Treasury to say that he still remained very hostile to it; but I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that it was much easier to find fault with the Act than to say what should have been done in the circumstances. It is a very cheap part to play to find fault with the Act of 1881 unless it can be shown that there was a better alternative at the time. But we have, I admit, got beyond the Act of 1881. It was a just Act, inasmuch as it imposed what was a natural sentiment, and what was in accordance with the facts and ideas of co-ownership; but it seems to me to prove we must go beyond that. Having imposed the idea of co-ownership we have now got to do what we can to abolish co-ownership in order to substitute single ownership.

Then we come to the question of price; and on the question of price depends the prospect of re-payment. I agree entirely with my right hon. friend who spoke yesterday, that the interests of the British taxpayer and the Irish tenant in this matter are closely bound up together. I welcome again what the First Lord of the Treasury said in regard to his opinion as to how far we may build on the willingness of the Irish tenant to repay. But the price must be a fair one. How are we to discover it? I quite see that there must be a limit at one end. We must see that an excessive price shall not be paid, because if an excessive price is paid we diminish the security of the British taxpayer. This is not a compulsory but a voluntary measure, and the interest in this limit being fixed is security for the taxpayer who lends the money. There is no danger to the security of the taxpayer if an unduly low price is paid, and I cannot see the object of the minimum limit of price. If it were a compulsory Bill, then I admit, of course, we should have narrow limits on both sides; but being a voluntary Bill there is only one object in fixing the limit, viz., public security. I cannot see why the lower limit was introduced at all, as from our point of view the lower the price the better the security, and I feel that this minimum limit is a very serious blot on the Bill—so serious that although I propose to reserve detailed criticism on it for the Committee stage it is one which, if not dealt with in Committee, may modify my attitude towards the whole of the Bill. Then there is a further fault in the Bill which I do not press, but which I think will have to be taken into consideration, if not in this Bill, then in some subsequent Bill. That is the question of larger powers for dealing with the congested districts. I am sure you will have to go further in that direction, not in the way of general but of special compulsory powers, than the Bill goes at the present time. You realise that it may be necessary to bring some compulsion to bear on the tenants who stand out, because if a fourth of the tenants stand out you propose to deprive them of certain privileges they now possess, and make their position less favourable than at present. You realise that the Bill, to be useful, must be large and comprehensive in its object. But is there no danger of a minority of landlords, perhaps one landlord, standing out, perhaps in those districts where the Bill is most needed. You will have to face the question, and even if you consider that you will launch the Bill without large powers in this direction, I think the House of Commons ought to be prepared to feel that in passing a Bill of this kind, the more largely and extensively the Bill operates the better; and you will have to take into consideration the question of dealing with special districts and special cases in Ireland.

One more point, and here I am not in agreement with what I understand to be the views of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland generally. I frankly admit that I like the rent-charge being reserved. I should like to say that the rent-charge, if maintained, will have to be reserved to an Irish local authority. I think that will have to come; and I do not cavil with the establishment of the principle that, subject to fair compensation, there is inherent in the private right of holding land a recognition of the paramount rights of the community at large. I entirely agree that if you carry out this Bill you must retain control to prevent subdivision and mortgaging. I see in the rent-charge a valuable principle underlying the right of the community with regard to the land; and in so far as it enables control to be exercised as regards subdivision and mortgaging it can have nothing but a practical effect. I rather prefer the rent-charge because it lays down a central principle when we are making a new start with regard to the land; and it is desirable it should be preserved. But there is another method of retaining control. That would be to offer the local authorities the right of pre-emption without a rent-charge and make it impossible for land to be subdivided, or mortgaged, or disposed of without the consent of the local authority, leaving the individual owner, in all other respects, in complete control. But even those who objected to the rent-charge are agreed that something must be done to give the public authority control and to prevent these evils from arising. Now, let me come to the minor objections of principle. As to the free grant, it is an obvious retort to those who have pressed for economy to say that it is inconsistent now to advocate the expenditure of money. But in the instance cited, that of the Army Votes, we were pressing for the economy of millions; and the annual expenditure for this free grant, including the Sinking Fund, will only be £390,000; and unless the Bill operates more rapidly than is expected, that expenditure will not be reached for fifteen years. In pressing for economy on the Army Estimates, our reason was precisely that we knew that more money was needed at home. The Chief Secretary has given some figures of how money will be saved if this Bill be passed. Some of these figures may be open to question. But what is not open to question is that, directly or indirectly, if this Bill achieves only a part of its objects, the public saving with regard to Irish government will be infinitely greater than the annual interest of the free grant. In my opinion it is not fair to say that this free grant is a grant to the landlords. It is quite true that the money is to be given to the landlords, but the interest in the grant is both the landlords' and the tenants'. If the landlord gets the money, the tenant gets the land; and when we discuss the grant we ought to speak of it as a grant of money which is given, not in the interest of one class, but equally in the interest of both classes.

I sympathise with the desire to see the evicted tenant question dealt with as comprehensively as possible. We are told that in money and in the numbers of persons affected it will be a comparatively small matter. But in sentiment it is a large matter. There is sentiment underlying all these questions; and it is at least a subject for consideration whether it would not be wise, considering the great gain in sentiment and spirit, to re-open the question in Committee. As to the working of purchase, we have experience to go on, and we know what the effect of the Bill is likely to be in Ireland. Mr. Bailey's report says that the holdings of tenant purchasers have largely improved; that in many districts the actual carrying power of the land has been increased,

Sir Edward Grey.

largely by good management; that the tendency to sub-let and sub-divide has to a great extent disappeared, and that the tendency to sell has diminished; that the general solvency and credit of the tenant purchasers has much improved; that the Gombeen man has to a great extent disappeared; and that the standard of comfort has risen considerably within the last generation. That is a body of evidence drawn from experience which does make the prospect of a new Land Purchase Bill attractive. Because Ireland has depended mainly on agriculture, she has suffered with exceptional severity from what I think, was a right fiscal policy and from economic causes which could not be helped. Lately there has happily come into the Irish government a recognition of the fact that agriculture is an industry which must be conducted on scientific lines and with modern organisation. That that has been done better than in England is largely, if not entirely, due to the courage and persistence of Mr. Horace Plunkett. The hon. Member for Stoke held up Mr. Plunkett's political opinions to opprobrium. I do not care what his political views are, in view of the practical value of his work in Ireland. Ireland has now a prospect, which she has never had before, of being a good model of successful agriculture; and we are asked to get rid of this blighting system of the dual ownership of land. When, for the first time within living memory, Ireland has a prospect of being commercially successful, surely that time is opportune for removing this obstacle to agricultural prosperity. Irish Members have thought it right to declare that, in dealing with the agrarian question, we must not hope to settle the political question; and the First Lord said that the Bill was not intended to alter people's convictions. We all of us entirely accept that position. We used to be told that to settle the Land Question was to settle the political question. We must be ready to abide by the result; but we must not regard the political question as in any way prejudiced. In my opinion, this Bill is not going to solve the political question in Ireland. It is not going to abolish Irish demands for more self-government. But it is going to introduce composure and reason into the future discussion of this question. It is going to enable the British electors, provided that it operates on the large scale that is hoped, to deal for the first time with the Irish political question on its merits, and to discuss Irish demands unbiased by all the misapprehension, bitterness, and ill-feeling to which the struggle for the land has given rise. I agree that it would be desirable to have introduced the Irish local authorities into the working of the land purchase system. I am sorry it is not in the Bill. It would have been an extra guarantee of the good and successful working of the system. But I am deeply impressed by the experience of recent years, with the futility of attempting too much at once. There is nothing in the Bill to prevent the introduction later on, of the Irish local authorities as parties to the working of the system. The Bill has difficulties enough before it in Committee. I do not regard it as an unpopular and disagreeable necessity. I see at the present moment a great opportunity of dealing with Irish land, and an attempt in the Bill to use that opportunity for good. It may be so handled in Committee that our attitude to it will be entirely changed. But I wish to see the Bill sent to Committee with the best encouragement we can give to it; and I hope to see it emerge as an active measure. That being so, as far as I am concerned, to vote against the Second Reading or to withhold my vote in favour of the Second Reading would be to take upon myself the responsibility of risking being a party to the doing of a mischief both to Ireland and to our relations with Ireland, which it would be beyond the power of the Liberal Party, or I think of any Party, to repair.

*SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth): For a good many years I have taken the greatest interest in Irish land legislation, and on this account I think I may claim the indulgence of the House. The question of land tenure is one which, in all ages, has been attended with the very greatest difficulty. There are two or three main obstacles which have prevented princes and rulers from getting a good system of land tenure. The first difficulty which has to be encountered is, that as soon as a system gives any tenant fixity of tenure in his land, he is able to borrow, and it is this facility for borrowing which has rendered the system so unsatisfactory. In England, though farming families continue for many generations, it is very seldom that the yeoman owning his own land continues for long, because the fatal facility for borrowing makes it necessary for him to sell his farm. Then when the individual had no permanent interest in any particular piece of land, when it was held by the village in common, as it has been in Russia and elsewhere, they were met by the difficulty that the land was so badly cultivated that it would only support a very small population. When the period for re-distribution approached, whoever cultivated a certain piece of land would take all he could out of it and put nothing into it, because he knew he would not have the opportunity of cultivating it any longer. The result of this system was that land went into an extremely bad state of cultivation. Hon. Members will probably ask, what is a good system? Although I know the hon. Member for East Mayo will not agree with me, I assert that, as far as I can see, the English system of farming at present is as good a one as we can find. The farmer in England does not want to buy the land, and it would not pay him to do so. Suppose a man possessed £800 capital. If he were to buy the land he would be lucky if he could get twenty acres of good land with house and buildings for £600, and that would leave him only £200 for stock, and to put the house and drainage in order. But if he got twenty acres he would be a very small man indeed. Instead of doing this he uses the whole of his money as working capital. He takes a farm with a house, with buildings and fences and roads provided and everything in a good state, and he has not to lay out one penny on these things. Consequently he is able to keep the whole of his money for stocking the farm. The result is that he gets a farm of 100 to 150 acres instead of twenty, and in that way he manages to live extremely well. The first question I may be asked will probably be, why cannot the English system be adopted in Ireland? The reason is that the holdings in Ireland are so extremely small that the landowners could not afford to build a house upon them. On a holding of £5 a year how could you expend £150 upon a house and buildings—and I am sure you could not provide them for less. And if they were provided the tenant is not willing to pay any more rent. In cases where the tenant has built his own house, of course it is only right that he should have a certain amount of compensation.

I approved of the compensation clauses in the Act of 1870, but I entirely disapprove of the Act of 1881. In order not to introduce any unnecessary irritation I will confine myself to the economic objections to that Act. To begin with, you ensure that every new tenant shall always be rack-rented. A man leaving his farm and going to America or to the Antipodes has no interest in his successor on the farm, and, naturally, he extorts the last farthing. The result is, that, by allowing tenants to sell to successors at the highest price, you ensure that every future tenant will always be rack-rented. The next objection I have to the system is that it does not ensure good cultivation, because when the fifteen years rent revision is approaching the tenant wants his farm to look as wretched as possible so that the Commissioners will fix a lower rent. Therefore you give to every tenant an inducement to cultivate the land badly. As the result of the working of the Acts which have been passed upon this question, I came to the conclusion, before the speech of the Prime Minister, that we had got into as bad a state of land tenure in Ireland as could possibly be arrived at. The small holdings of £5 a year, and so on, have been the greatest curse to Ireland, because they are not large enough to employ the energies of a man and his family. The Acts we have passed have tended to perpetuate these small holdings, and they have also given full powers of borrowing money, although as yet those borrowing powers have not been exercised so much as we might have expected. We have now arrived at an impossible position, and the question is, what is to be done? We are not starting afresh, but we are facing an impossible position created by successive Acts of Parliament. If we were starting from the year 1869 I believe we might make a better scheme. What we have now got to do is to find a scheme that will work, and find a way out of the present deadlock. It seems to me that if we do not pass this Bill we are going to get into very great difficulties. Re-valuations are now going on, rents are being again enormously decreased by the Commissioners, and loud complaints are being made that there has been no fall in prices since the last valuation sufficient to justify reductions in rent averaging about 22 per cent. In my part of the world the farmer is always complaining that the price of Irish store cattle always goes up, and the dealers say that the price of horses in Ireland goes up. Therefore, I do not see how the Government, if this Bill is not passed, can refuse a very searching inquiry as to whether the reduction of rents is not being made unfairly. I do not see how any just Government can avoid inquiry into this question. Supposing it is found that the rents have been reduced too much. Are we to have the whole question of land Commissioners and Sub-commissioners and their system of fixing rents fought out in this House? Take another case. Prices cannot always go down. If they did we should get eventually to nothing, and then, instead of selling your produce, you would have to pay some one to take it away. Supposing prices went up all round for agricultural products. If prices go up, then, of course, if justice is to be done, rents must go up too. Tenants have got into their heads that re-valuation means reduction, and if they were raised I think we might have all the difficulty over again. I agree with every word that has been said by the hon. Member opposite as to the tone and spirit in which we ought to approach this question, and as to the great opportunity which now presents itself for solving the problem once for all. It is no use for me to pretend that I approve of the Act of 1881, or that Members on this side of the House approve of it. We do not. But that is no reason why I should not try to find the best means out of the difficulty, or to find a scheme which commends itself to Members on this, as well as to Members on the other side of the House. Having given the most careful attention to the subject, I can honestly say that I mean to do my best to help the Bill through in a conciliatory spirit, and I hope it may do all the good that is expected of it.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): Everyone who has listened to this debate must have noticed the difference between the spirit in which the leaders of the Liberal Party have approached this great subject, and that in which the Unionist Party dealt with the measure in 1886, when every kind of misrepresentation was used. Yesterday the Leader of the Irish Party was good enough to criticise an Amendment I had placed on the Paper objecting to this free gift to Irish landlords as an inducement to sell their land at prices in excess of its value, and I was practically told that it was none of my business. It was an excellent instance of the hon. Gentleman having become gamekeeper of the landlords' preserves. He warned me off, but he has himself been a poacher on those preserves for a great many years, and he affords a good illustration of the saying that an old poacher makes a zealous gamekeeper. As to this being none of our business, I only wish the hon. Gentleman had acted on that principle last year in connection with the English Education Bill. But I will pass from that. I am absolutely astonished at the attitude of hon. Members opposite when they tell us we may, with perfect security, invest £100,000,000 in Irish land, and that we can expect the Irish tenant to repay that money with regularity and punctuality—in fact, that the Irish tenant, in his dealings with the British Exchequer, will be one of the most punctual and honourable of men. They almost invest him with a pair of wings, but when it comes to a case of Irishmen dealing with Irish affairs in Ireland, then it appears that they are invested with a double dose of original sin, and cannot be trusted to manage their own affairs. I do not quarrel with the attitude of the Government; all I hope is that they will carry their principles a little farther, and let Irishmen have an opportunity of managing their own affairs in their own country.

I come now to what, after all, is the main point of this Bill—namely, the price which you are going to pay to Irish landlords for their land. When Mr. Gladstone introduced his Bill in 1886, we had pictures at the election of truck-loads of gold going into the Irish landlords' pockets. But what was the price Mr. Gladstone proposed to pay? He did not propose to pay, as is proposed in this Bill, something like twenty-five years purchase of the first-term rent, but to pay sixteen years purchase, that is to say, instead of £2,500, he proposed to pay £1,600.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): At sixteen years purchase of what?

MR. LAMBERT: Of the first-term rents.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: There were none fixed at the time.

MR. LAMBERT: The Act had been in operation for four years, and Mr. Gladstone distinctly stated that he would take the first-term rents or a fair equivalent, and he proposed to give sixteen years purchase upon that basis. Was that a generous offer to the Irish landlord? The present Colonial Secretary, speaking on 20th April, 1886, said—

> "I do not know if the Irish landlords will think it a sufficiently advantageous offer; I should, if I were in their place."

That was the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman then. In June he said—

> "There are 10,000 individuals in Ireland who are cared for; they have no cause to complain of the proposals made for their benefit. So far as they are concerned, the protection is complete. The 10,000 landlords in Ireland are to be protected at the cost and risk of the British taxpayer."

I ask, if the Irish landlords were well paid by sixteen years purchase of the first-term rents in 1886, why is it they have to be paid this larger sum to-day? I will take the Chief Secretary's own figure of £4,000,000 second-term rents. If we take twenty years purchase, it will be found that Mr. Gladstone proposed to give the Irish landlords £80,000,000 for their £4,000,000 of rental, but this Bill proposes to give them £112,000,000. What real reason is there for giving the Irish landlords to-day £32,000,000 more than Mr. Gladstone proposed in 1886? I will go further. What has been the price of Irish land on second-term rents? I can take no better authority than Lord Dunraven, who, writing to the *Freeman's Journal* on 11th April, said that the average price of second-term rents had been nineteen and a half years' purchase. On £4,000,000 of rent that would work out at £78,000,000. Why are we called upon to make an advance of £112,000,000 for that which is admittedly worth only £78,000,000? We were told last night by the Prime Minister that the landlords never spent a single penny on their estates. If that is so, why are they to have twenty-five years purchase, *plus* three years as a bonus, making twenty-eight years purchase altogether? That is the question I want to ask, and it is the question, I think, which follows up the argument of the Leader of the Opposition. It is all a question of price, and you are giving the landlords too much. If I possessed the incisive eloquence of the Colonial Secretary, I should call this a bribe; instead of that, I will call it a kind of solatium to the Irish landlords—a slight token of our esteem for what they have done in the past. What have they done in the past? My own impression is that they have been the cause of a great deal of the agrarian strife in Ireland, because they have extracted, or attempted to extract, impossible rents from the tenants. The Chief Secretary said, "Oh, yes, but the police in Ireland are required largely because of the illegalities born of agrarian unrest." That is a pretty euphemism for "attempts to extract impossible rents from Irish tenants." It seems to me that we have very topsy-turvy ideas as to the position of Irish landlords. We seem to imagine that their position is a very unenviable one. The Chief Secretary described to us an Irish landlord being supported in the workhouse by the rates of his tenants. If the Irish landlord was so harassed an individual, one would have thought that he would be very glad to sell at a fair price. But not a bit of it. We were told by Lord Dunraven on April 24th that the great majority of landlords were not anxious to sell. Why are they not, if their position is so precarious? We have been told that they were like corks drifting on seas of litigation.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is since 1881.

MR. LAMBERT: Oh, no! The Prime Minister made a very different statement from that. He said that in Ireland there was a system under which, for historical reasons—and historical reasons go back farther than 1881—the landlord did not spend a shilling on his property. Why is the credit of the Imperial taxpayer to be pledged to give to Irish landlords an enormous benefit, which I think they hardly deserve? We were told at the Landlords' Convention that the Irish landlord was to receive a sum which would bring him in something like 3¼ per cent. I really do not understand why the Chief Secretary should value Irish land at this enormous figure. Moreover, I will try to show that this bonus of £12,000,000 is in reality £32,000,000. I take twenty years purchase, which, according to Lord Dunraven, is more than the average price of second-term rentals. Does the right hon. Gentleman dissent from that?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): You said it was in the Bill.

MR. LAMBERT: But you have £20,000,000 wrapped up in the Bill about which you say nothing. The landlords are to get all their legal expenses paid—that represents a considerable sum — and they are generous enough to suggest that all economies in administration in Ireland shall go towards the relief of the tenants' instalments. We heard a great deal of the Act of 1881. One would believe the Irish landlord's position prior to 1881 was a bed of roses, that no Irish landlords were intimidated, no agents were shot, and that there was no difficulty at all in obtaining the rents. Now the effect of that Act was to reduce first-term rents by 20 per cent. and second-term rents by 17½ per cent., therefore you have a reduction in Ireland of 37½ per cent. I can point to hundreds of cases in England where landlords have made all the improvements and the reduction has been 37½ per cent. and more. British land ought to be as valuable as Irish land, but can you find estates in England where you can get a twenty-eight years' purchase. What are the results of the Act of 1881? I find that whereas in 1881 there were 3,000,000 cattle in Ireland the number had increased in 1891 to 4,600,000; during the same period sheep had increased from 3,200,000 to 4,300,000, and whereas in 1881 5 per cent. of the people were living in mud cabins, I am glad to say that in 1891 the figure had decreased to 1·4 per cent., and I hope that number will soon disappear altogether. Then there is the tremendous bonus as regards their demesne land, and it gives the demesne owner the advantage of British credit, and enables him to clear off a mortgage, and put money in his own pocket as well. It was proved the other day in a letter to *The Times* that if you had demesne to the value of £10,000, of which £6,000 was on mortgage at 4½ per cent., the landlord would get the mortgage cleared off in sixty-eight and a half years and put £85 into his own pocket. That is the excessive price you are going to pay for this Bill.

That brings me to the point of tenure, and I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that it is by the tenants' inability to pay the instalments that we have to judge of this Bill. I would rather see the Imperial money spent in relief of the tenants of Ireland, than in the relief of the landlords of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has so fined down the instalments that he has been able to give a larger purchase price to the Irish landlords. Altogether this Bill teems with examples of how the landlord's interest has been protected. He has been swaddled in purple and fine linen. They are even better off than the people in the Rand, because they get their sovereigns for nothing, whereas other people have to work for them. Then the Ashbourne Act provided for a seventeen years purchase, but under this Act you are going to give twenty-four to twenty-eight years purchase, and in order to give other advantages to the tenant you have reduced the Sinking Fund from 4 to 3¼ per cent., and made other changes. I contend that all these ingenious calculations and contrivances have been made to give the Irish landlord an extreme price for his land, and thus tend to reduce the security of the State. A recent example is that of a sale of a Waterford and Kilkenny estate which has a nominal rent of £4,300. The landlord will receive in cash about £75,000, and had agreed to the sale on those terms. Now the landlord and his representatives want to postpone the sale because they will get an infinitely better price under the Bill. They will get £107,000 instead of £75,000, and what justification is there for putting £32,000 into the pocket of that Irish landlord, who had agreed to sell under the Ashbourne Act for £75,000. I think also that this increase in the number of years instalments to be paid by the State, constitutes a great danger and blot on the Bill. What will happen? In thirty or forty years time all the tenants under the present Act—some 74,000 as far as I can ascertain—will have their land free, and will not have to pay another penny, but the tenants who buy under the Act will have to pay another thirty or forty years and will never have their land free. That arrangement will not add to the contentment of Ireland. I take also, as I have stated in my Amendment, a rather serious view of bringing the Treasury into contact with something like 400,000 tenants. There are 275,000 tenants in Ireland whose holdings are under £10 a year, and fancy bringing the Treasury into direct contact with these tenants of holdings of uneconomic value, and who, if they had their holdings for nothing would hardly get along. Mr. Gladstone in 1886 spoke of that danger, and his words are as true to-day as they were then. You are bringing the Treasury into direct contact with this enormous number of tenants in Ireland, and you cannot expect, especially in bad seasons, that your instalments will be regularly paid. Of course public opinion supports the view of punctual payments in Ireland at the present time, but it may change under pressure of events. The right hon. Gentleman says we have material security in the Bill, but does anyone believe that you can withdraw the Exchequer contribution grants from Ireland? What would be the views of the Irish members on that point? Then we are told that this Bill is intended to check the deadly stream of emigration from Ireland. The *Freeman's*

Journal says that not for many years past has the exodus reached so high a standard as in the present year. How are you, by giving this large grant to the Irish landlords, going to stem the stream of emigration? Under the Local Government Act of 1898, you put direct into the landlords' pocket £316,000 a year in payment of their poor rate. I opposed that Bill because it would do nothing to help the poor tenants, and it has done nothing. The emigration returns show that two years before the Bill passed the number was 32,000 and two years after it had increased to 43,000.

I agree with the Irish Members in giving more power to the Congested Districts Board, and in putting upon that Board the Chairman, and possibly others, of the County Councils in Ireland, but, in this case, where you could do some good in that way to these poor people, the Bill is miserably inadequate. The right hon. Gentleman told us he hoped this Bill would settle the Irish Question, but he did not speak with great confidence on that point. Then we had the opinion of an authority, a right hon. Gentleman who now sits on the Treasury Bench, who tells us he will look forward to the next Bill. I notice the Unionist newspapers, who give a sort of squirming support to the Government on this measure, suggested that the Solicitor-General ought to hand in his resignation to the Government. The right hon. Gentleman of course has the power in his own hands. We know that the Prime Minister dare not dismiss him from his position because, if he poured in a couple of broadsides into this Bill, it would founder the whole concern. You are giving this enormous grant to the Irish landlords—£32,000,000 more than the land is worth—and yet you are doing nothing for the self-government of Ireland, or to settle the Irish questions. It was said the other day that if the King visited Ireland he would get no official reception, and we were told last night that this is intended to make he people of Ireland loyal.

I imagine that the supporters of the Government will rub their eyes with astonishment when they read the statement of the hon. Member for East Mayo that we are going to give this enormous grant of money in order to facilitate the sale and purchase of land, and that it will not make Ireland more loyal, and that it will not turn Home Rulers into Unionists. I do not object to the system of land purchase if you carry it out under reasonable conditions and give the Irish landlord a fair price for his land, which I maintain is not more than twenty years purchase. Supposing that an English landowner is to have land compulsorily taken from him you would give him compensation of 10 per cent. There is another evil which we will have to face, especially if you give this enormous grant to the Irish landlords. The Government will be turned into an absentee landlord in Ireland. I do not know what will be the result of that, because if the landlords leave Ireland you will be turning the Exchequer into a gigantic absentee landlord for sixty-eight and a half years. I do not regard this Bill as one for purchasing peace in Ireland. I regard it more as ransoming the Irish landlords.

*MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary is, I think, to be warmly congratulated upon the reception which has been given to this Bill, not only in this House and in Ireland, but, I may add, throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. There has been a general, practically a universal, recognition of the fact that its principle is sound, that its object is worthy of support, and that its scheme, both in its financial and other aspects, may reasonably be expected to go a long way towards the final settlement of the Irish land problem. I have no doubt that my right hon. friend has carefully felt the pulse of public opinion in reference to this large and generous measure which he has submitted to the House and the country. I am sure that he and this House must have been impressed by the practical unanimity of that opinion throughout Ireland, among all ranks and classes of the people, in favour of the general principle and main provisions of the Bill. Those of us who have taken advantage of the Easter recess to visit our constituents and consult with them in reference to the Bill are, I think, in a position to assure the Chief Secretary and the House that the manifestations of public opinion in conferences and conventions, in speeches and in letters to the newspapers, accurately reflect the earnest desire which permeates the minds of the Irish people that the Bill should pass into law. I desire to emphasise this fact because many points in the Bill have been subjected to criticism, but that has been only upon matters of detail. General exception has been taken to some provisions which may or may not be considered by the Government to be vital provisions. But what I wish the House to bear in mind is that there is no body of opinion in Ireland which desires the rejection of the measure; but that, on the contrary, the earnest wish of the whole people of Ireland is that it should become law. Consequently all Amendments that may be proposed will be intended only to facilitate its operation and to more effectually attain the end we all most earnestly look for—the complete and lasting settlement of the Land Question. In his speech introducing the Bill my right hon. friend expressed the belief, which events since then have fully confirmed, that possible failure would not be due either to the Irish landlord or the tenant, or to the general taxpayer. I believe with my right hon. friend that neither the Irish landlord nor the Irish tenant will place obstacles in the way of the successful working of the Bill. I believe, moreover, that the general taxpayer, both in Great Britain and Ireland, will appreciate the advantages which must accrue to the United Kingdom and to the Empire from a settlement of this question, and that the hon. Member who has moved the rejection of the Bill will have a very small following, either in this House or in the country. And it is because we are deeply anxious that there should be no failure owing to what my right hon. friend has modestly called "shortcomings in the framing of the Bill," that we who represent the cause of Unionism in Ireland submit such suggestions and criticisms as appear to us to bear in the direction of strengthening the Bill.

Now, of course, there are defects in the measure—several serious defects in my opinion, and, indeed, in the opinion of all who are conversant with Irish land problems. To some of them I should like to refer, as they are not the subject of controversy at all in Ireland, but are universally regarded as defects in this great scheme, though, I must add, not by any means incurable defects. There is, for example, the restriction contained in Clause 17 dealing with the tenant's right to have a fair rent fixed. To take away this right, as the Bill proposes to do in certain circumstances, will be resented strongly, and naturally resented, by all the tenants—certainly by all the tenants in the north of Ireland. There is no right so dearly prized by the tenant farmer. To take it away from him as the Bill proposes in certain cases, or even to suspend it, as is proposed in other cases, would inflict on him a great injustice. It is, moreover, an element of compulsion in a Bill which is intended to go upon purely voluntary lines. Besides, in the vast majority of cases there is no pressing need for it, as the great inducements offered by the Bill will be sufficient in themselves. But every tenant will be irritated by the possibility of compulsion being applied to him, and that in itself will tend to check, not facilitate, the purchase of land. I trust that the Chief Secretary will in this important matter give way to what, by this time, he must know is the unanimous feeling of the Irish tenant farmers, and that he will delete this irritating and unnecessary provision. Then as to the limits of what the Chief Secretary has described as the "zones of reduction within which bargains for purchase may take place." Irish opinion is adverse to such cast iron limits. I believe that the minimum limit should be retained, but that there should be no limitation upon the maximum reduction. This, I think, should be left to agreement. I think that at this stage we should have at least an explicit statement from the Government of the reasons for the provision of the limits of reduction of rent. Again, with regard to the perpetual rent-charge of one-eighth, this seems unnecessary and should not be insisted upon. The only reason claimed for it is that it is an effectual check upon unauthorised dealings with purchased holdings. Now such unauthorised transactions cannot take place for sixty-eight and a half years, until all the instalments of the purchase money have been repaid. The retention of the rent charge, I submit, is therefore unnecessary. Its only effect would be injurious. It takes away from that magic sense of proprietary which in all ages and countries has been the greatest incentive to industry. The Irish tenant farmer wants to buy out all other interests. He is content to pay for the long period of sixty-eight years provided he is freeing himself from the whole burden, and not merely from a portion of it. I think, therefore, that the rent-charge is calculated to check the desire for purchase, and, of course, that would be very unfortunate. I would, therefore, suggest the omission of this provision, and that the reservation of a small quit rent would effect the object which is desired.

I come now to the feature of the Bill which has much impressed the popular imagination—that is the grant-in-aid of £12,000,000. The necessity for some such grant has been amply demonstrated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and is, I have no doubt, clear to all who know the practical difficulty that at present retards land purchase in Ireland. That practical difficulty is, of course, that the sum which the tenant can afford to give falls considerably short of what the landlord is equitably entitled to receive, and, indeed, what he can afford to accept, and some such grant is needed to bridge over that difference. I would remind English and Scotch Members of some important points in connection with that grant. In the first place the sum of £12,000,000 is a maximum, extending over many years, and which can only be reached if this Bill becomes completely successful; and I think nobody will deny that its success will far more than justify the expenditure. Then another point is that not more than £390,000 is to be charged upon the Exchequer in any one year, and of that sum, I need not remind the House, Ireland is entitled to £185,000, its equivalent for the education grant to England. Besides, if, as seems reasonably certain, the expectations of my right hon. friend are realised, and economies in Irish administration are effected to the amount of £250,000 a year in consequence of the Bill, the result would be that practically no money whatever would have to be found by the State in respect of the object of the Bill. So far as the British taxpayer is concerned the grant would practically not affect him in the least. While £12,000,000 is a generous provision I do not think it is sufficient to meet the case. What is sufficient has been variously estimated; but there is I think, a general consensus of opinion in Ireland that at least £15,000,000 or £16,000,000 would be required. I desire to know, therefore, whether there is any hope of the grant being increased. If the Government cannot see their way to give a larger bonus I hope they will seriously consider the advisability of imposing a time limit of, say, three or five years, within which only those landowners arriving at an agreement to sell their estates should be allowed to participate in the grant. This, no doubt, would form a sort of compulsion, but one that was only counterbalancing that put upon the tenants in depriving them of their fair rent rights. If the latter restriction is retained, some such pressure as that of a time limit should be applied to the landlords. But I should prefer that the inducements to landowners should be made more effective and more equitable by an increase of grant. Besides, by increasing the grant the bonus could be made uniform and at the same time increase the average. All parties in Ireland are agreed that the graduated scale of bonus should be abandoned in favour of a uniform scale. The graduated scale under the Bill does not offer sufficient inducement to large landowners to sell. I trust that the Government will give an assurance upon this matter, as there is practical unanimity in Ireland that it is desirable and necessary.

There are several other points on which the Bill might be usefully amended. For example, I think the limit of £3,000 for advances should be increased to £5,000 at least, so as to include large farms, of which there are many in the north of Ireland, and I think it would be unfair that the holders of them should be excluded from the benefits of this measure. Then the exclusion of mill farms from the present Land Acts is recognised as a great hardship, and as most of these mills are of no value, and are never likely to have any, the tenants of them are, properly speaking, only agricultural tenants. I hope some provision will be made to give purchase powers to such mill tenants. I think that special provision is needed in the case of Church perpetuity leases and Trinity College leases. These tenants have had to submit to judicial reductions of their sub tenants' rents on two occasions, but after having submitted to these reductions no relief whatever has been made available to them in respect of their rents, simply owing to their special tenure. This hardship is one which, I believe, will be accentuated by the purchase rights granted to these sub-tenants under this Bill, and ought to be met by the insertion of some provision in the Bill. There is one provision in the Bill which I regard as of some importance, viz., Clause 16, by which the sporting rights are reserved to the vendor who has purchased part of his estate. I believe this to be a very proper and useful provision. We want to encourage the present landowners to remain in the country. It will undoubtedly be to the great advantage of the farmers and tradespeople, and to the general community, that this loyal and independent class should not be deprived of one strong attraction to reside amongst the people.

There is another matter to which I desire to allude, and that is the provisions in the Bill relating to labourers. These provisions are good so far as they go, but they do not go anything like far enough. They only touch the fringe of what is a very important part of the land problem in Ireland. I trust that we shall have some assurance from the Government that that part of the Bill will be amended or extended, so as to confer greater benefits upon a very deserving class, or else that separate legislation will be proposed to secure a very necessary amelioration of the condition of the agricultural labourer. The points I have referred to, are, I believe, important and essential to that complete success of the scheme which we all so earnestly desire. Apart from that, however, they are in a measure subordinate to the main principle of the Bill. All we ask from the Government is that full and fair consideration may be given to them. As an Irish Unionist Member, I appeal to this House to sanction this measure. I appeal to hon. Members representing the interests of the United Kingdom to join in settling this question, which has cost the Empire many times more than the grant under this Bill. The immediate and the direct benefits it will confer to Ireland, and indeed to the whole Empire, cannot be over-estimated. As Unionists we can afford to disregard the professions of the belief of some hon. Members opposite, that the removal of the Irish land difficulty will be a stepping-stone to Home Rule. On the contrary, in my opinion it would rather tend to the strengthening of the ties that bind Great Britain and Ireland together. The Land Question has been at the bottom of all the political agitations, and of the greater part of the crime, in Ireland for the last hundred years. Settle that question by establishing the Irish farmer upon his holding as the owner, and he will apply himself with an energy he never before exhibited to the cultivation of his land. And the possession of the land will destroy in him the germs of disloyalty and unrest which have hindered his prosperity so fatally in the past. Moreover, as he witnesses the steady improvement of his own position, he will more and more realise the advantages of having open to him such a market as Great Britain offers for the disposal of his produce. And from such material advantages the conviction will grow in him that his prosperity depends in a vast measure upon the maintenance of the Union. The prosperity of Ireland—the contentment of her people—the stemming of the tide of emigration which is draining Ireland of the most virile portion of her population—in short, the full development of her resources—these are the results which will follow from the settlement of the land problem; and they are surely worth the pledging of the Imperial credit, and the expenditure of a few hundred thousands a year. I shall, therefore, support the Second Reading of this Bill, knowing that I shall, thereby, carry out the unanimous desire of my constituents, and firmly believing that it will confer lasting benefits not only upon Ireland, but upon the United Kingdom and the Empire.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): Mr. Speaker, everyone must admit the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Land Bill of 1903 has done so in as able an address as was possible, considering the weakness of his case. His speech abounded in assertions, but not in facts, and certainly not in logic. He demanded if the Land Bill becomes law similar privileges for English tenants and labourers, and he asked was it a wise policy to yield to threats of violence and continual agitation, if the demands of the Irish representatives are any longer refused. As regards the other statements of the hon. Member, the argument *contra* is the simple but effective one that the circumstances of the Land Question in both countries are quite different, and that a law which would be manifestly necessary and fair in one country would be unjust and uncalled for in the other. Prior to the famine time the old class of Irish landlord, although possessed of unlimited power, was as a rule generous and kind to his tenants, and seldom increased the rent. It was the advent of the Encumbered Estates Court Act of 1851, and a new race of landlords, which produced the state of confusion prior to 1881, and which is responsible for most of the troubles which have so grievously afflicted Ireland for the past fifty years. In the county in which I live landlords like the Duke of Abercorn, Lord Belmore, the Earl of Castlestuart, Sir James Strong, Lords Powerscourt, Ranfurly and Charlemont, and many others, were always kind and indulgent to their tenants, whose rents had not been increased for generations. When the Land Bill of 1881 became law they suffered quite as much reduction in rent as the landlords who had bought under the Act of 1851, most of whom had doubled or trebled the rents, and had in consequence enjoyed 10, 15 or 20 per cent. on their outlay for twenty or thirty years. I know a case where a property was bought to pay 5 per cent., which was immediately doubled, and the landlord received the increased income for thirty years. When, in 1881, the rent was reduced by 30 per cent., he took the matter philosophically, and remarked that he had not fared so badly after all. In another instance a noble Lord bought a small property for £10,000, revised and increased the rent, and immediately resold it for £15,000; again, a wide-awake solicitor, hearing that a well-known physician was anxious to become a landlord, with a view to civic honours in a northern city, bought a large property in the Encumbered Estates Court, doubled the rents, sold half of it to the doctor for a larger sum than he had paid for the whole estate, and kept the other half, thus clearing a profit of 100 per cent. without spending a shilling of his own money. These are only a few examples within my own knowledge of what was a common practice, and one which was suggested and encouraged by a British Act of Parliament. What excuse has the hon. Member to make for a law, the evil consequences of which British statesmen must, or rather should, have known, and which they allowed to exist for thirty years without taking any action to remedy. If the same conditions had been allowed to exist in Great Britain, the British people would have soon solved the difficulty by a revolution, and they would have been justified in doing so.

When times were fairly good, the poor Irish people had to submit to all those evil results emanating from British misrule; but in 1878 and 1879, prices fell away and the sufferings of our people became so great that flesh and blood could no longer tolerate the wrongs they were obliged to suffer. The result was the terrible uprising of an oppressed people, followed by that great act of reparation, the Land Act of 1881, introduced and passed by the greatest British statesman of the century, whose memory will always remain fresh and green in the hearts and minds of the Irish people. This Act was hailed with enthusiasm, it gave new life and freedom to an enslaved race; but as year after year its beneficial effects became more apparent, so also did its injustice and defects. It reduced rents indiscriminately, treating the old race of landlords in the same way as those who had purchased under the Estates Court Act. The Act of 1881 undoubtedly interfered with the known laws of political economy, and statesmen recognising in future years its baneful results introduced Purchase Act after Purchase Act, and also amending Land Acts, each doing some good, but still not curing the evil, and producing in those who could not purchase bitter feelings at their unequal treatment. In the West also the condition of the people, notwithstanding the efforts of the Congested Districts Board, became more menacing and intolerable These poor people live a miserable, hand-to-mouth existence, and are often on the verge of starvation.

Their condition is a standing danger and disgrace to the British Government. Discontent being therefore rife in the land, it was not hard in 1898 to stir up agitation once more; but the effort was feeble in comparison with former efforts, and was controlled by the decisions in the Taff Vale and Tallow and other cases, which prevent village busybodies and boycotters from carrying on their nefarious trade of stirring up local and general strife and profiting themselves by the turmoil they produce. The Roman Catholic Clergy also, and notably the patriotic Bishop of Elphin, condemned in the interests of their country the wiles of these disturbers. Ireland in certain parts became, however, so unsettled that the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary, had no alternative except to enforce an exceptional law which everyone hates. Although strong, however, he was gentle and sympathetic, and while he showed that he would not allow Ireland to be ruined by feebleness and irresolution, at the same time he was determined to do all in his power to heal her open wounds. With this object in view he introduced into the House of Commons the great Land Bill of last year, which at first was received on all sides with approval, and which was a much better Bill in many respects for the tenants than the Land Bill which to-day is receiving its Second Reading. Only two clauses were objected to, viz: the 16th and 36th. The first was certainly bad; the second contained within it excellent germs which could have been made to bear good fruit. This Clause ordained that any landlord or tenant who wished to sell or buy could apply to the Land Commission to fix a purchase price, which he could either accept or reject. If the price was considered fair no doubt the landlord would have sold, in which event the tenant was obliged to buy or else forfeit his right to go into the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed. This was undoubtedly unfair, but if the Land Bill had been submitted for consideration to a Grand Committee, composed chiefly of Irish Members, it could have been easily amended and made to work admirably. No seller would sell a cow or a horse or other article without knowing the price a purchaser will give for it. Neither could a landlord be expected to part with his estate to the Land Commission without knowing what he was going to get for it. The very fact, however, of a landlord applying to the Commission showed clearly he wished to sell, and also that he could not expect to get more than, at the very highest, twenty years purchase of his first-term rent, which would have been one year more than the average price. Supposing, then, an original rent of £100, reduced by 20 per cent. to £80 as a first-term rent, was sold at twenty years' purchase, the landlord would have received a capital sum of £1,600. The Bill of last year proposed to lend the cash at 3¾ per cent. I have every reason to believe the terms would have been reduced in Committee to 3¼ per cent., the same as in this year's Bill, and if this had been done, then, in the example I have taken, a first-term rent of £80 would have been reduced by £28 to £52, or a reduction of 35 per cent. Under the Bill of this year the minimum is placed at 20 per cent. of a first-term rent, which would make the future rent £64, or £12 annually worse for the tenant than in the Bill of last year. In addition the landlord will receive 15 per cent. bonus, or £295 on the capitalised value of the property, viz., £1,970, which will give him a lump sum of £2,265, and an income, if the cash was invested at 3¼ per cent., of £73 12s. in lieu of an uncertain rent of £80. A landlord, therefore, is £21 12s. better off in such an example, and the tenant loses £12.

Again, under the Bill of this year if the first-term rent is £80, reduced by 40 per cent. to £48, it continues for 68½ years, and its present capitalised value is £1,497 6s. Under last year's Bill the average of the lowest reductions would probably be seventeen years, and in this case the rent would be £51, terminable in forty-nine years, the capitalised value of which would be £1,336 2s.; the tenant is, therefore, even in this instance, £161 4s. to the bad. Under the old Bill, even if the interest had remained at 3¾ per cent., the highest rent a tenant would have had to pay would have been £60, and this sum, capitalised and terminable in forty-nine years, would amount to £1,572. Under the Bill of this year the capitalised value of a rent of £64, terminating in sixty-eight years, is £1,996 8s., and the tenant loses £424 8s. Either way, therefore, the new Bill is looked at, whether the rent is the highest or the lowest possible, the tenant is a heavy loser when compared with the Land Bill of last year. He must, however, accept the situation unless he determines to reject the Land Bill of this year, which, although not nearly so beneficial to him as the Act of 1902, still possesses sufficient attractions to render its rejection a simple act of madness, which no one having his country's interests at heart could ever dream of for a moment. The fact is, the Taff Vale decision, the Tallow judgment, the decisions of County Court Judges making the boycotters and village tyrants and other evil counsellors responsible for their acts, and in addition, the general apathy of the Irish people, who are really sick of agitation and recognise the injury it has done to their country and themselves, as well as a general industrial revival, and the strong opposition to all their ways of a determined but intensely patriotic band of Independent Nationalists, to whom the country owes a deep debt of gratitude, forced the hands of those who had been prominent in the agitation. Hence the Conference under Lord Dunraven and the proposals which emanated from it, including the toast of His Majesty King Edward VII, which doubtless all the Nationalist Party will join in honouring as soon as the Land Bill becomes law, thus acknowledging, as they have a right to do, if all we hear is true, the warm sympathy His Majesty has for our country and his desire to make the Irish people as happy and contented as the other countries embraced within the British Empire. Last year eight or nine Nationalist Members of Parliament dared to attend the Coronation of our King, and for doing so were abused and slandered in various newspapers. Six months afterwards the very same journals were praising His Majesty to the hilt, and several of the leading Members of the Nationalist Party, as well as a great teetotal advocate, were pleasantly engaged in pledging the good health of the King in flowing bumpers of champagne. It is a blessed change in sentiment and policy, and one which in the near future will bear ripe fruit. The fault of those who advocated a different policy lies, or rather lay, in their want of the faculty of detachment, by reason of which until the last few months they seemed unable to understand Ireland's altered and improved condition, which required very different treatment to that accorded to the patient in 1879 and 1880. All honour, however, to the man and men who, however late in the day, have at last diagnosed the conditions and applied the necessary remedy. Our country has a price to pay for the mistake, but under all the circumstances it will I believe be cheerfully rendered.

I have referred to the 36th Clause of last year's Bill; I have shown that the opposition to it was inconsiderate and wrong. No landlord would have applied under it unless he was prepared to accept at the most twenty years purchase of the second-term rent, which was above the average price prevalent in Ireland, and I have demonstrated that under it the tenant would have received a reduction of 35 per cent. in his rent. This, then, was the compulsion he was to be afflicted with, viz.: that he was obliged to change a rent of £80 for one of £52, which latter included repayment of the Sinking Fund equal to a further reduction when compared with the former rent of £8, and he was told that if these terms were not accepted he would continue as the tenant of the Government, and would not be allowed the doubtful privilege of again applying to the Land Courts for a further revision of his rent. Fancy pitying a buyer of a cow or horse who was offered the animal at 35 per cent. less than its supposed value; and let us picture the terrible compulsion that we all would suffer if we had a similar offer made to us; and yet it was over a clause having this effect that the hon. Member for South Tyrone almost went into hysterics in denunciation of a perfidious Government, which dared to harbour such malicious intentions. It is a pity the Irish people can be so easily misled, but they trust without question some of their leaders, and in doing so often suffer from serious delusions. Probably the lesson they have recently learned will teach them to think for themselves, which will have good results in the near future. When the Bill of last year was in serious danger, in common with others, and notably the hon. Member for North Louth, some of the Nationalist Members tried to stem the torrent of abuse with which it was assailed. In a series of four letters to the Press I showed the great benefits which the Land Bill of 1902 offered to the tenants. First in Ireland by many weeks; I suggested a Conference between landlords and tenants. I asked Questions on this subject in this House, as the records of *Hansard* can prove. The way for the Conference had been thus well paved when Captain Shawe Taylour appeared on the scene and made his brilliant and daring suggestion, actually naming the members who should compose the Conference, and calling upon them to come together and arrange the Land Question in the only satisfactory way it could be settled, by a friendly discussion between the opposing leaders. The proposal was certainly startling, because no one in Ireland believed there was a room in Dublin large enough to hold such discordant elements. Unfortunately, the Landlords' Convention did not rise to the occasion, but there were others of the class who were not so easily discouraged, who gladly met the representatives of the tenants, and produced a series of suggestions, many of which are embodied in the present Land Bill, which we all hope will soon become the law of the land, and prove a firm foundation upon which to build a future for Ireland of peace, progress, and prosperity.

The Land Bill of 1903 is a great measure which contains eighty-nine clauses; its chief characteristics as compared with the Land Act of 1902 are the cheapness of the loan, the offer of a free gift of £12,000,000, the enlargement of the investing power of trustees, and the power given to both landlords and tenants within certain limits to arrange their own terms of sale and purchase. There is also a clause providing in some measure, but not sufficiently, for the evicted tenants. Most of the other clauses in the Bill are merely repetitions of the many excellent provisions in the Land Bill of last year, and relate to simplification of the landlord's title, local registration, the appointment of a public trustee, arrangements about bogs, reduction in legal expenses and on sale, protection of sporting rights, enlargement of the powers of the Congested Districts Board, and the division of the purchase instalments into a seven-eighth terminable annuity, and one-eighth quit rent. From all I have been able to gather from frequent interviews with solicitors and others, there can be no doubt that the framework of the Bill is excellent, and that the value of most of its provisions and their liberality is striking and original. The blot on the Bill is the small notice taken of the labourers, which, in the present state of the labour market and its importance to the welfare of the farmer, should not be overlooked. It would seem to me a valuable provision if power could be given to the County Council to buy up vacant farms and divide them into allotments for the labourers, building on each a comfortable cottage, and allowing the labourer to become the owner of his home much on the same terms as the farmer. Some such arrangement as this would enable the labourer to be well housed. Where a cottier house at present exists, and is in the occupation of a labourer, if unsuitable and insanitary it should be rebuilt by the District Council, and an acre of land purchased for the holding as a right. As regards the other clauses of the Land Bill most of them are sufficiently explicit, and require little amendment. Clause 1 defines the minimum and maximum reductions above and below which the purchaser cannot, on an estate with encumbrance not exceeding two-thirds of its value, go. I see no reason why the landlord and tenant should not be allowed to agree to a greater reduction, if they so please. It seems to me the lower the future rent the greater the State security. There is some objection to the quit rent. The amount is considered excessive. There can, however, be no reasonable doubt that a small charge, say of 10 per cent., would be a benefit to the country, and should be made a permanent Government charge. The difficulty will be in the collection of this tax. A very efficient and simple plan would be to make the tax collectors of each county include this quit rent in the county collection, and earmark it for useful county purposes, industrial development, secondary education, and the better housing of the working classes.

The clauses dealing with sporting and riparian rights should be amended, so as to give the whole power over the surface of his farm to the tenant; the

Government retaining for the benefit of the State all mineral rights. Moors, bogs, and mountains should be excepted, and the shooting and sporting rights over them, as well as riparian rights, reserved to the Land Commission or County Council for the public benefit. Since the tenants have become so largely their own masters Ireland has suffered severely by the ruthless cutting down of timber. I believe the trees on each farm should be preserved to the State and placed in each county under the control of the county surveyor. Every effort by suitable clauses should also be made to re-afforest waste lands. Very little mention has been made of future tenants, or those who possess mills. I believe both parties should be allowed to participate in the benefits of this Act, and should be granted the privilege of considering their present rent as a first-term rent, and purchasing under the same terms as other tenants. If some arrangement of this sort is not made, it is hard to see how the landlords can dispose of their estates as a whole to the Land Commission, as there are future and mill tenants on nearly all of them. Another matter of consequence is the position of the middle-man tenants; hitherto they have been left out in the cold, and it would seem only fair to allow them the same privileges under this Bill as other tenants. Great objection has been taken to the clause which allows a simple majority of tenants on an estate to dictate terms to a minority which might be only one less than the majority, and which hinders the minority if they refuse to buy, from seeking the benefit of the Land Act of 1881. If a three-fourths majority was required the objection would not be so strong; but there can be no doubt that any compulsion or deprivation of the rights of the tenants under the Act of 1881 is strongly disapproved of. The remedy, however, is easy. Allow the dissenting tenants to remain as tenants of the Land Commission and leave them all the rights they now possess; in a very short time the tenants would see the folly of their action, and understand it was hardly to their interest to remain any longer than absolutely necessary the tenant of the party which has the power of appointment of both the Sub and Chief Land Commissioners.

The first schedule detailing the percentages of the purchase and aid grant is unpopular with everyone except the smaller landlords; it is framed entirely on a misapprehension. It is the larger landlords—two dozen of whom own half Ireland—who should be induced to sell. Five per cent. on the capitalised value is not a sufficient inducement in their case. The aid grant of £12,000,000 should be sufficient to offer each landlord a bonus of three years rent purchase. Twenty years ago I suggested this very proposal. If this offer was only made available for three years, within which time all those who proposed to sell their properties to the State must have registered their intention, I believe when the time had closed, and with it the offer, there would be very few properties indeed left unsold. The restriction of the amount of sales to £5,000,000 in a year is a mistake. The figure should be raised to £7,000,000, or even more. The quicker the sales the better for our country and people. The speed at which sales will be effected depends upon the perfection of the machinery, and this would be greatly enhanced by the appointment in each county of an Examiner of Title. If not possible in each county, then at least two examiners should be appointed in each province. Irish solicitors complain greatly of the inconvenience, delay, and petty obstructions placed in their way in the Central Dublin Office. Again, the clause in the Bill authorising the Estates' Commissioners to appoint persons to make title is objected to, not only as a serious interference with the rights of the solicitors, but also because these new authorities could not possibly have the same knowledge of the various estates and their peculiarities and charges as the family solicitor must necessarily possess. Another important class who must be conciliated, if the Bill is to work smoothly, is the land agents. Unless they are fairly treated sales will be few. Their knowledge of the different estates is essential to the speedy working of this great Bill. I believe they would not make any unreasonable demand, and would be satisfied if the law gave them a right to a small percentage on the completion of each sale, or else made them the receivers of the terminable annuities at half their present fees. This matter was referred to on the First Reading by the hon. Member for North Louth, and many Members on this side of the House agree with the hon. Member, notwithstanding the recent suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone that he would much prefer to compensate emergency men. The Bill requires Amendment as regards bogs. If the Government buys a landlord's estate, it should buy it as a whole and not in part; without turbary at a reasonable price the tenant is greatly handicapped. It would meet all the requirements if the Government bought the bogs with the estate, and subsequently rented to each tenant and landlord the bog holding which he formerly held. The tenants, however, have this matter in their own hands by refusing to purchase their holdings without a due allotment of turbary.

Another point upon which there seems general agreement is the folly of keeping the tenants in leading strings; they are not to mortgage their holdings, etc., and a spy is to be put upon them in these matters in the shape, under a penalty, of the tax collector. This might answer in India but is quite impossible in Ireland. Prevent subdivision without the sanction of the Land Commission, if you like though even this is a doubtful advantage, and in some countries, notably in France, subdivision has been found to act advantageously by encouraging a return to the country of those who have made money in towns and wish to spend their declining days in or near the old home: but nurse and interfere with your newly-made tenant as little as you can, or you will interfere with his sense of self-respect and self-dependence. In the working of the Land Bill of 1881 you had experience of the evil results of interference with the ascertained laws of political economy; and in attempting to throw obstacles in the way of the owner of a farm, acting as his interests dictate, you are only laying up for yourselves difficulties which you may find it hard to limit. If a farmer wants capital he will have to get it somehow and if he cannot borrow on the security of his farm he will on his disposable effects, cattle, furniture, or other property; and if these go in liquidation of his debts, how can he work his farm? Besides, hard times may come, and in order to live he must borrow—you can never protect the improvident man, in time he will certainly go to the wall, and if his place is taken by someone else of more business habits, surely it is better in the end for the general interests of the country. The Irish tenant must be allowed to borrow; many of them have no capital, and they are all liable to sudden small losses. The proper plan to overcome these troubles is by education, and by the establishment in as many districts as possible of agricultural banks; which, wherever initiated, have worked well and completely met the difficulty. Another mistake in the Bill is the proposal to make one sub-commissioner do the work of two. The present system, evil as is its result, is the evolution from previous blunders, and should not be disturbed; the sooner, however, the peregrinations of the sub-commissioners are put a stop to the better, for no country could possibly flourish where such a system has long continued. That it has not long since ruined and demoralised Ireland—setting as it does, and did, a premium on idleness and lying—is simply due to the honesty of the Irish people. No one denies, of course, that some Act was necessary to protect the tenants and give them fixity of tenure, fair rents and free sale; but all this could have been accomplished, after the first rent-fixing, by a system, such as was often suggested, of allowing the rents to rise and fall automatically in a fixed cycle of years, according to the rise and fall of produce and cattle within fixed areas.

The clause relating to the evicted tenants is insufficient, and every reasonable inducement should be held out to these men to return to their homes, where their farms are still vacant. I fully understand the reasons that prevent graziers coming under this Bill. I certainly would not suggest that their landlords should share in a bonus on sale to them, but I see no reason why, with the consent of the Land Commission, the landlords and tenants should not be allowed to consider the existing rents as first-term rents, and arrange between themselves, *minus* the bonus, reasonable terms of sale and purchase by the State. The Congested Districts Board has done a great deal of good, and some foolish work; it should be strengthened by adding to it a few representatives of the people, nominated by the County Councils which are affected by the provisions of the Congested Districts Act. There are, of course, a great many other questions of importance raised in the Bill which require close attention. Taken as a whole the Land Bill of this year is a most comprehensive, well arranged, and well thought out measure; notwithstanding its many difficult and intricate details, its main characteristics are easily found out and understood. It reflects great credit on the Government, and especially on the right hon. Gentleman who is its sponsor in this House, and who moved its Second Reading in one of the ablest and most sympathetic speeches towards my country I ever heard in this House or out of it. Never before has Ireland's harp been played upon by a more skilful British player; hitherto, its chords have remained untuned and unstrung, and any time they have been touched they have only given out discordant music. Yes, Sir, the harp that once reverberated through Ireland has ceased to give forth sweet music. All life and song is stayed in our country owing to the grotesque folly of successive British Governments, who from the time of the Union until the year 1869 paid no more heed or attention to Ireland than if the country had no connection with the British Empire; our manufactures you killed, our tenantry you robbed, our labourers you failed to give employment to, and your own friends the landlords you treated unjustly by an Act of Parliament which was framed with the best intentions, but was administered in such a way that the good landlords—the old Irish families who were the friends of the people in dark and troublous times, who were residents and not absentees—were plundered, while another race of landlords grew up, too many of whom were only impelled by mercenary motives, and who oppressed our people without mercy within sight of your shores, and without your British statesmen raising a finger of protest or doing anything to ease the situation or apply a remedy. Is it any wonder, under all these circumstances, that you are not loved by any parties in Ireland?

If what I have attempted to prove is true, and you can satisfy yourself on this head by referring to histories, is not the case for a settlement of the Irish Land Question by some such Land Bill as the present measure abundantly proved? If the present Irish difficulty has been produced by your bungling legislation, if the fault is yours and not that of the Irish people, is it not your duty to repair the damage you have done even if it requires a few millions of sovereigns to accomplish the desired end? Do you not owe to Ireland countless millions for your neglect and wrongdoing? Do you not owe her something for the sons she has produced who have fought your battles everywhere over the face of the earth? Have you repaid her by attention to her wants, for the statesmen who saved India, for the soldiers who fought for you in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, in the Crimea, and recently in South Africa, and for the host of Irish generals who came to your assistance in the dark days that followed the disaster at Colenso? Have you forgotten the gallant deeds of your Irish soldiers on many a stricken field throughout that campaign? Do you remember Colenso and Pieter's Hill, and will you repay all Ireland's great services to your Empire by your present Land Bill and a gift to your own people in Ireland of £12,000,000? I ask the hon. Member, in all humility, has he been satisfied in this debate that Great Britain is only giving us back a small portion of the money she owes us, or does he imagine that the Irish people are going to the British Government, hat in hand, to beg for a dole. I tell him our people would rather starve than occupy such a position. We place little dependence on British Governments, but we do rely upon the sense of justice of the British people, and we feel sure that, when they are convinced a great wrong has been done to Ireland, they will have no hesitation in accepting the proof and applying the remedy, even if it requires some millions to accomplish it.

A good deal has been said about the danger which may result in the Irish people not fulfilling their obligations. Is there in history a single example of their having failed to do so? For twenty years Purchase Acts have been in existence, large sums have been lent to the Irish people, and you have it in evidence, and especially in the recent most valuable report of Mr. Commissioner Bailey, that almost every farthing of these loans has been repaid. Indeed, if the House dived deeper into these transactions it would be found that the

British Treasury has made a very considerable profit. I can vouch for it that the Irish people will honestly fulfil their obligations. I have spent over thirty years working amongst them. I know them in a way very few in this House can boast of doing. I have spent my life in the closest contact with them. I have seen them in their homes. I have sat with them for hours in their times of sorrow and suffering. I have been a witness of their love and sympathy for each other, of their patience, their pluck, their courtesy, their deep religious and high moral character; and in business transactions I can vouch for their honesty. To a people with such a character the British people need be under no apprehensions whatever. What they undertake to do through their representatives in this House, you may rely upon it they will faithfully perform, fulfil, and keep. The British people have a great opportunity. The policy of the present Government is to redress the wrongs and to bring back contentment and peace to Ireland. You have already seen the beneficial effect produced by one little touch of kindness. You know how the name of King Edward VII is revered in Ireland, because he is believed to have taken a part in trying to heal the wounds of our country, and you know the splendid Irish welcome which awaits him when he crosses the North Channel. The necessity for this great Irish Land Bill has been demonstrated to you. Will this British House of Commons reject it and plunge Ireland again into despair and agitation? I feel certain it will not do so; on the contrary, I believe in the justice of the British people now that their eyes are open to the true light, and that their statesmen are determined to see justice done. Pass this Bill then, and the beautiful prayer of the Irish Leader—when he closed the recent Convention—will be fulfilled, and the God of our fathers will fill our land with peace and plenty and bless our country and the British people.

*MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I desire to say a few words on this Bill because I possess an attribute which is common to those who have lived in Ireland for a considerable portion of their lives—namely, a deep interest in the country and in the Irish people, and because in the constituency which I represent in this House there is a considerable Irish population. The last charge which can be levelled against an Irishman when he is away from his own country is that of neglect or want of thoughtfulness of those whom he has left behind. I believe that this Bill presages a new era in Ireland. I believe that any legislation framed on new and equitable principles could scarcely be worse than the system of land tenure which has hitherto obtained in that country. My hon. friends the Members for Stoke and North Islington, if they wished to object to this Bill, ought to have propounded some scheme whereby the Irish Land Question could be settled. The question must be settled. It occupies a most anomalous position; the dual ownership must cease. The recent Land Conference opened up a new vista in Irish affairs, and will go down to history as one of the greatest landmarks in the relations between England and Ireland. Before the Conference was held I do not believe that anybody anticipated any good result. The opinion in this country was very much the same as that which was held about the Bloemfontein Conference four years ago, when we imagined that one party at least to the Conference met the other only with a view to finding out the weak joints in the other's harness. It is a subject for congratulation that we were mistaken. There has never been so signal an instance of the wolf lying down with the lamb, but it would be invidious to try to discriminate as to which was the wolf and which the lamb; but I am perfectly certain if the Conference had been less successful that each party to that Conference would have claimed separately to represent the sublimer and more edible animal. I wish briefly to touch on the Act of 1881. I do not think that anyone will deny that on the whole it was a beneficial Act—at any rate to the tenants. But there were three things which it professed to do but did not do. It professed to be a final Act; it was supposed that it would establish the tenant in a perfectly happy position, so that he would live on terms of contentment and amity with his landlord; and, thirdly, the landlord was to occupy a position very similar to that of landlords in this country. Those predictions have been falsified by events. Mr. Forster, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, said—

> "If these arrangements had the effect, which we say they will not have, of converting landlords into mere rent chargers, the consequence of it would be that we should lose the advantage of a landlord class, which would be very injurious."

The prophets of evil were right, and Mr. Forster was wrong. The direct consequence of the Bill of 1881 is the Bill now before the House, and I think it would have been much better if the foresight of the statesmen of that period had seen that this Bill was inevitable and had brought it in at that time. How much anxiety, sorrow, and crime, would have been obviated if that had been done. I hope that this Bill will achieve great results, but as an English agricultural Member I believe if my right hon. friend had seen his way to bring in a Bill exactly on the lines of the Land Conference it would have been still more satisfactory. I do not say that from the landlord's point of view, but I think the methods of the Land Conference would have accelerated purchase and the object we have at heart. It is true that the Conference proposals would have involved an expenditure of three or four millions more, but what are three or four millions in our vast expenditure? As compared with the scheme of the Government to impose on the British taxpayer a charge of seven millions or eight millions annually under the Brussels Sugar Convention, the whole of this is nothing more than a flea-bite.

I do not wish to delay the House, but there is one other part of the Bill to which I wish to refer, namely, the question of the one-eighth which appears to give so much displeasure to hon. Members opposite. I do not mind if it is one-eighth, or some other very small portion, if in the future it safeguards the peasant proprietary in Ireland, and ensures that we have no recrudescence of landlordism and its concomitant troubles. Safeguards are needed. What is the position of the peasant proprietors in France? They would hardly exist were it not for the existence and help of the *Crédits Fonciers.* Or take the land in Russia granted to serfs; that is now nearly all in the hands of Jews. I will come nearer home.

Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore.

There is in my constituency probably the largest cohesive peasant proprietary in the kingdom; it is about twenty miles in length and fifteen or sixteen miles in breadth. The people are the most industrious to be found in any country, and it will appeal to hon. Members opposite below the Gangway that many of them are Irish. But the large proprietors have been successful and the small proprietors rather the reverse. Up to 1810 they enjoyed a meed of prosperity, but after that date bad years and the fall in prices produced calamities there as in other parts of the world. The small peasant proprietors, having nothing to fall back upon, had to revert to the simple process of mortgaging their holdings, and thus this part of the country has become known as the "Solicitors' Paradise." I hope that safeguard will be maintained so that small holdings shall not lapse again into anything like that state.

I wish to touch upon another part of the Bill, and that is that I think it is a most ill-advised proceeding on the part of the Government to graduate the scale on which this bonus is to be doled out. You want to accelerate and lubricate the wheels of purchase, and therefore I think the selling of estates *in globo* will prove most efficacious. If you sell the large estates the small estates will almost automatically follow. I will give a few figures. I take estates between £120,000. I take two estates of £60,000 each, three on the 6 per cent. scale of £40,000; six estates in the 10 per cent. at £20,000, and twenty-four on the 15 per cent. at £5,000 each. The total bonus on the first group would be £6,000 or £3,000 apiece; on the second group £7,200 or £2,400 apiece; on the third group £12,000 or £2,000 apiece; and on the fourth group £18,000 or £750 apiece; On the 15 per cent. basis the first group would get £6,000 or £7,000 apiece; the second £10,800 or £3,600 apiece; the third group £6,000 or £1,000 apiece more. This shows not only the injustice of the whole system of graduation, but it will tend to wreck the whole aim and object of the Bill, which is to get purchase accelerated. Take what is almost accommodation land outside Dublin, Belfast, or Cork. That land will get 15 per cent. while the poor estates in the West, such as the

Murphy and De Freyne estates will get only 5 per cent. I am glad to see that the cost of stamps and transfer will be paid by the State. Mr. Bright in 1847 initiated that principle. Mr. Bright said it was their duty to bring in a Sale of Estates Bill and make it easy for landlords to dispose of their estates; and he further said that they should diminish temporarily, if not permanently, all stamp duties which hindered the transfer of landed property. There is another point, and that is the question of a local body being created to carry out this Bill. I cannot approve of this principle, because the great amount of the money will come from this country. I know some people can look after other people's goods and chattels very well, and even after other people's children, but I think the principal proprietor of the money should look after the money bags himself. Therefore, I shall resist any proposal of that kind. There is one other respect in which I think there is a chance of this Bill breaking down, and it is with regard to those gentlemen who were granted special provision in Scripture, and who have a knack of providing for themselves wherever they may be, the lawyers. I hope every effort will be made to cut down legal expenses under this Bill, and this measure, when amended, will become one of the greatest legal achievements that this House has ever passed. I thank the House for listening to me, and I shall support the measure which the Government has brought in as strenuously as I possibly can.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): I am sure the House has listened with pleasure to the speech of the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, and we were surprised at the remarkable utterance that fell from his lips, in which he said that he hoped we should not have in Ireland a recrudescence of landlordism with its concomitant troubles. The hon. Member went on apparently to express the hope that this Bill would not be used as a lever in the direction of obtaining Irish self-government. That is a subject upon which hon. Members have touched lightly. I desire, however, to direct the attention of the House to this aspect of the Bill, which is one about which we can perfectly well understand the silence that prevails among the different classes of hon. Members who are supporting this Bill. Hon. Members from Ireland desire not to complicate that wider question with this particular one, and that is a legitimate desire. We who represent English constituencies have our minds full of that, and hon. Members from Ireland would not desire that we should repress the expression of our views, upon such an important consideration, in connection with this Bill. There are two views put forward. On the one hand we have the Ministerial view, which is that by this Bill you will settle a long-standing dispute which has destroyed social order in Ireland, and having made the problem of social order so much easier to solve, they infer, not unnaturally, that Irish Government will be a simpler matter. On this ground they commend the Bill to the country as one which will make against Home Rule. There is another view put forward by hon. Members for Ireland. They think that if they achieve the object they have so long desired of abolishing landlordism in Ireland, they will have captured a position which has been very steadily contested, and promote the solidarity of different classes in Ireland, and they will proceed as a more united, and firmer and stronger force for the attainment of their final end, namely, the self-government of their country. Which view is correct? I think we should give some consideration to that problem. This is the only stage at which we can consider it. In the Committee stage we shall have passed to the details, and this subject will be totally irrelevant. Which of these two views is correct with regard to the bearing of this measure upon the wider question of self-government? For my own part I am disposed to think that the view taken by the Irish Members is correct. The Ministerial view is one which undoubtedly is supported on high authority, but when one comes to look at the views of Ministerialists, and particularly of this Ministry upon any subject, particularly any Irish subject, our experience of them does not tend to increase our confidence in their powers of prediction. They have generally been wrong, and they have never been so conspicuously wrong as upon this question of Irish Government.

Most of us, I think, listened with astonishment to the speech of the Prime Minister last night, but that speech certainly did not increase our confidence in him as a prophet. That same speech, had it been made in another country, might have come under the Crimes Act, and led to a plan of campaign. We heard for the first time from his lips, and for the first time from the opposite side of the House, that Irish landlords never put a shilling into their land. In the past the indictment was not brought up against a sect, but it was the Irish people who have been held up as the people who would not pay their debts. What did we have from the Prime Minister last night? He attributed all this to what he euphemistically described as a co-ownership. What would have been said by some of the Irish landlords, or those representing them, if, in the various struggles with the land question, when they were appealing for eversion, the Prime Minister had told them that these little characteristics were only due in a sense to co-ownership? That is a handsome tribute to the Irish people. We have already got a tribute from the Chief Secretary, who thinks that the Irish people not only pay their debts, but pay them with pleasure. That is a view which ought not to pass unnoticed. I venture to say that no Englishman has felt anything but pain and indignation at the way in which a campaign of calumny has been carried on against the Irish during all the years we have been dealing with this question. The Prime Minister went so far as to repudiate any intention to bring in a Home Rule Bill, and he had the daring to refer to the character of Ministers. It is precisely the character of Ministers which gives rise to apprehension on the part of their followers. Even this very question is a test of the accuracy and value of previous and present Ministers. Mr. Parnell proposed an Arrears Act which was declared by Lord Salisbury to be dishonest, but six weeks after that declaration the Government of that day brought in an Arrears Act. This Government, after condemning the plan of campaign, are now likely to adopt it, and I suppose that in time we shall have it expressly approved.

I pass from the character of the Ministry to the character of the Bill, and I ask, what is the influence it will have upon self-government. We are going to buy out our landlords, but some of them will remain. Those who go will, of course, cease to exercise any influence on the character of the country, but what of those who will remain? There is a very ingenious clause in the Bill which has been inserted with the intention of inducing some of them to remain. There is a provision in the Bill by which the landlord, having disposed of the land which he has previously let to farmers, may next part with his own demesne to the State and receive it back again as a tenant on very favourable conditions. The intention of that obviously is to get him to remain in the country. Why is it desired by hon. Members to keep him there? I doubt very much whether the provision in the Bill relating to sporting rights will survive the Committee stage, but if it does those rights will be but of little service to him. His duties will be very greatly curtailed and his responsibilities and functions as landlord will disappear. There will be nothing left for him but to take part in public life, and the only way in which he will be able to do that is to become a Nationalist, because he cannot take part in it under his present constitution. So long as the elective principle is left unmolested by this Government, and it prevails to any extent in Ireland, the remaining landlords, if they desire to do anything for the country, will have to range themselves on the side of the country. This will increase the solidarity of Ireland on the question of national and local self-government. Then what is the effect of the Bill on the other classes? You have 300,000 labourers for whom only the most inadequate provision is made; you have there an element which will still remain an element of unrest and disturbance. That element will appeal to the national sentiment, and on its side national sentiment will surely range itself.

Now, with regard to the farmers generally. You are going to give the land of Ireland to these tenants at a rate of purchase higher than any yet made in Ireland. An anonymous, but obviously well-informed writer in *The Times* shows that the second-term rents on which purchases have been made have been capitalised on the average of nineteen years purchase. Under this Bill the lowest number of years purchase is twenty-six, and it seems to me to be more like twenty-eight. But, taking twenty-six years, you have seven years purchase more to be paid under this Bill than has been hitherto paid. They are obviously paying a substantial rent for a very long number of years, but it is a commonplace of Irish politics that you have an enormous number of tenants in Ireland, out of whom you cannot extract any economic rent whatever. That condition of things will still remain. The Irish tenants will no doubt fulfil their legal obligations to the best of their ability, but now and again, in times of stress and bad seasons, they will find it impossible to fulfil them. What will happen then? You will have under this Bill no collective responsibility of control on the part of the Irish people, and, depend upon it, you will have a recrudescence of the old trouble. The State cannot make any sort of abatement which the tenant formerly got out of the landlord, who, whether a good or a bad landlord, had to make abatements somehow. The State dare not make any abatement, because if it were made in one district it would be immediately demanded in another. You will, in this way, have a new wrong created in Ireland. A large number of tenants will be called upon to pay a rate which they cannot possibly pay, and Irish national sentiment will range itself on the side of these distressed tenants. Irish sentiment has always taken advantage of such an opportunity, and it will not cease to do so in the future. The injury inflicted by the landlords on the Irish people has always been put in the forefront of the argument, and in course of time this Land Question will be revived as a weapon of attack against our system of government—not revived dishonestly, but necessarily. I am not pointing that out for the purpose of alarming hon. Members opposite. I am not pointing it out as a necessary and desirable result.

The Chief Secretary went on to say that there had been few defaults as yet on the part of the tenants. The right hon. Gentleman said that out of the 80,000 cases we have had, there had only been cases of default to the extent of £3,000, and that this amount would be diminished yet further. I should like to examine that a little. We have not been told to what extent selection and choice have been at work in the making of advances to particular tenants. They have not, I apprehend, made advances to every tenant. They have cut down not merely the amount of the advance required, but they have, I imagine, in certain cases reduced the advance to the tenant. Now, there is to be no selection in future. That, however, is not the most important consideration put now to the Irish Nationalist Party. They have assisted land purchase when a tenant has been sold up under the land purchase scheme. I do not know how many cases have been so dealt with, but there has been no accusation against a person that he was a landgrabber because the Irish Nationalist Party had supported land purchase fully. How many cases there are of default we have not been told. In cases of default there has nearly always been a purchaser ready to give a price for the land. I would ask the House to consider the situation that will be created under this Bill, and to see what is likely to be the attitude of the Nationalist Party in these changed circumstances. I have asked you to conceive a condition of things in which there is an existing wrong and in which a price is demanded under this Bill, and to consider if the price is more than the tenant can fairly pay. To put the question argumentatively—who can doubt that the Nationalist sentiment will be on the side of the tenants? In that case I think you will have a recrudescence of the situation you have existing in regard to private landlords. If in Connaught you have a certain number of persons sold up because they cannot pay the rent, which public opinion pronounces to be excessive, you will have public opinion going a step farther and condemning the men who take the farms in these circumstances, under sales and the result will be that you will have, in connection with a farm which imposes an excessive rental on the tenant, an exact repetition of the situation we all condemn now.

There is a further point which I think has not been adequately considered in the debate. We were told, as if it were a light or unimportant matter, that you have twenty-five or thirty years for the whole of the transactions under this Act to be wound up. Just think what that means. You have got as a maximum £5,000,000 a year, which you are going to apply to the purposes of the Act. You have, therefore, an enormous number of tenants waiting their turn, and some of them apparently will have to wait twenty or twenty-five years, and it is not improbable that some will have to wait thirty years. Why, under these circumstances, should the land agents ask compensation? I should rather say that they should be commended to the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as fit subjects for additional taxation. If some have to wait for twenty-five years that means that a large number of tenants will say, "Why should we go on paying the existing rents?" and the situation created by the Bill will be repeated all over Ireland. On the one side of the road is a man who has got the advantage of the Act, who has got an abatement, and who is paying off the purchase money on his farm. On the other side of the road is a man who is not paying off the purchase money. Is he to be expected to go on paying the same rent? He will not pay the same rent. He will say, "This is a rent which is going to be reduced. I may draw one of the lucky numbers next year." Certainly in many districts it will almost paralyse the trade of the place. Again you will be told, and rightly told, by the Irish Members "Let us manage this matter. You cannot do it, you do not understand how to do it." They will say, "Give us effective responsibility and give us effective control." You will be bound to do it, and it is not right of everyone to go on discussing the Bill as if we did not know it. Hon. Members get up and talk about peace in Ireland, and repudiate all intention of passing a Home Rule Bill, but there is not one, who takes the trouble to exercise his intelligence for five minutes, who does not know that he is helping the Home Rule cause in Ireland. Let the English public be clearly informed on the matter, no matter who it tells for. The Irish Members are not strongly in our favour at present, but they may have some strategic motive for their action. We ought to mark the meaning of this measure, and let the country know what it is about.

There is one other aspect of the Bill to which I should like to direct attention. I say that you are asking too much from the tenant. I venture to say that you are also asking too much from the British Exchequer. I am not going to repeat that part of the argument which was so much dwelt upon by hon. Members as to the number of years purchase you are demanding. I am going to draw attention to a point which has been absolutely ignored in the debate, and on which I shall carry the assent of hon. Members from Ireland. We have been speaking of the amount the Exchequer is asked to pay. Let us consider the amount England has already given to the Irish landlords under the Local Government Act. The Irish Local Government Act was passed in 1890. It is old enough to be completely forgotten. In that Act the bribe took the form of paying the rates of the Irish landlords. We made a grant of £730,000 a year, and they have got it yet. Why did we give that money? It was said that unless we paid their rates we could not expect the landlords to submit to local government. Well, I consider that that has failed. What is to become of this money? It is a large sum. Instead of suggesting that it should cease to be paid by the British Exchequer, the Chief Secretary sets up the theory of equivalent grants. He says that he is in want of £185,000 a year more, because you are educating yourselves much better in England than they in Ireland, and that you owe Ireland that amount on the principle of equivalent grants. I would like to know what equivalent grant we are getting in England for the £730,000 the Irish landlords are getting in Ireland. The bases on which these grants are allocated between the various countries in the United Kingdom are eighty to England, eleven to Scotland and nine to

Ireland. Well, now, you have got under the English Agricultural Rates Act £1,700,000. But is a ninth of £1,700,000 £730,000? Of course the thing is absurd. The theory of equivalent grants should not be carried too far. We in England do not ask for this, and I hope we never shall. But, at all events, when £730,000 is given to one interest in Ireland we have a right to ask in the name of equivalent grants why you should give Ireland £185,000 more. These two sums granted to Ireland make £915,000 from the British Exchequer, the capitalised value of which is £30,000,000. The Prime Minister asked in a surprised tone—"What is £30,000,000?' I think we have reached a stage in our finances in which £30,000,000 is a very substantial sum. [AN HON. MEMBER on the Irish Benches: What about the war?] That is all the more reason why we should not throw money away on Irish landlords. You have got to add that £30,000,000 to the £12,000,000 under the Bill, but I insist that the £12,000,000 under this Bill must be exceeded. It is an estimate of this Government. I believe the estimate of this Government of the cost of the South African War was £10,000,000, and that one very cautious person even estimated it at £8,000,000; but that Estimate was enlarged to £250,000,000. The rental of Ireland has been assessed at about £9,000,000, and, therefore, we may suppose that the rental of agricultural land is £4,000,000. That is an adequately small estimate. Therefore, the £12,000,000 bonus will have to be largely increased. But even the £42,000,000 which the Government have voted away to get rid of the Irish difficulty is not quite enough. We do not know what further sacrifices may not be demanded from the British taxpayer in support of the Irish landowners, who were the cause of all the difficulty. I hope hon. Members for English constituencies will consider that; and also consider it from the point of view of the future working of this Bill, which I insist is an unjust burden alike on the Irish tenants and on the British taxpayers, in favour of a class which certainly has not, hitherto, been considered as the most meritorious in the British Empire.

* MR. GOULDING (Wiltshire, Devizes): I cannot follow the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken in his party recriminations. I should like to know what Member of this House, whether sitting on the Unionist Benches or on the Opposition Benches, is prepared to endorse all the actions in the past of the party he belongs to in regard to the treatment of Ireland? We have to remember that Ireland to-day is the only place where your policy of constitutional government has not succeeded. Your policy of constitutional government is adopted in the colonies, where it is received with acclamation. It is the model of constitutional government in every other country in the world, but in Ireland we know that this policy is accorded a different reception. And why? Because on every single occasion when you start to redress a grievance in Ireland, to repair the mischief of past legislation, you have always done so with the appearance of compulsion. You have never done it as a willing gift. You have only done it as a last resort. Surely this House is not for a moment going to rest and be satisfied with that! It is a blot on the good name of Great Britain, as the mother and leader of constitutional government, if this one stain remains on her fair fame. I for one rejoice greatly that the Chief Secretary has had the courage, the foresight, and the statesmanship to devote himself to the work of this Bill, and I venture most sincerely to hope that whatever criticisms of detail may be given, his work will receive the cordial approval and endorsement of the vast majority of the Members of this House from all quarters, and not from one section. Why is there ground for distrust which some Irishmen have for your constitutional government? It is because you have too long left their grievances unredressed. Can any single man look back, through the whole history of the Catholic reform, dealing with the religion of the vast majority of the people of Ireland, and say he is satisfied with the actions of our Parliament? he must regret the vacillation and delay. Has the House, has Parliament, ever fully appreciated or realised the passionate love and attachment which the Irishman has for his own home? They have taken no

practical steps, except in times of disorder, to give vent to the wishes of the people. What are the facts to-day? You have no disorder in Ireland. You have no regular statements of landlords seeking their rents in vain. You have none of those deplorable sights of evictions which, when carried on in large numbers, are degrading to the country on whose behalf they are executed. On the contrary you have peace prevalent in Ireland to-day. You have all parties represented by landlords and tenants coming together to formulate their demands for settlement on reasonable terms. Whatever individual Members on the Radical side may say, I do not think Irishmen, at all events, will ever be forgetful of the gratitude they owe to Lord Dunraven and the Leader of the Nationalist Party for what they did by bringing the claimants on one side and the other, to a common table, both of them engaged in a most difficult task and one which many thought to be impossible. The result of that Conference was that a common basis of settlement was proposed, based on second-term rents *minus* the amount of collection, which should not exceed 10 per cent. The hon. Member for Waterford is evidently determined from his speech to carry the same spirit of toleration to his actions in Committee, for he has told us plainly on behalf of the Nationalists that he is resolved to enter upon Committee in the spirit of compromise and common sense, and that a settlement shall be arrived at. Though I know my hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone has also occupied a worthy position in Ireland, in doing what he could to press forward the solution of this question, and was himself a member of this Conference, I cannot for the life of me understand how a man who has endorsed and signed a paper saying that these second-term rents are ample and sufficient, and should be secured to the landlord, can, on the floor of this House, say that they are imposing a rent which it will be impossible for the Irish tenant to pay. I, for one, hope that in Committee the Amendments will receive that patient consideration which I know they will from the Chief Secretary, and that the result of criticism in Committee will be to give such a measure as will justify fair hopes of settling this long-drawn-out trouble which has impregnated the Sister Isle.

What are some of the points which exist to-day in the land system of Ireland? You not only have dual ownership—which is difficult in itself—but two forms of tenancy. You have a tenant paying by instalments a rent which is to secure him the freehold of his holding, and next door you may have a tenant, paying a rent at even a greater rate per acre than his neighbour, with no prospect of ownership in the future, but with the certainty that within a period of fifteen years those rents may be revised. How can it possibly be expected that such a system will not lead to the chaos which undoubtedly prevails as regards the Land Question. How can it possibly be expected that any individual, animated in the way we all are, to do the best we can for ourselves—how can you possibly expect these tenants, when they know the period for the revision of rent is coming round, to devote the best of their time and intellect to the cultivation of the soil? Instead of that they will be turning their time and intellect to the consideration of the way in which they can get their rents reduced. That position of affairs cannot possibly go on. Therefore this Bill is introduced for the purpose of terminating that intolerable position, and of putting these tenants who desire to purchase, in the possession of their holdings, so that they may have a further inducement to cultivate and use their energies on the soil. This country is making a considerable sacrifice. Then, let that sacrifice be a generous one, and let us as far as we can remove all chances of failure. I for one, sitting for an English constituency, am willing to join hands with hon. Gentlemen opposite in trying to persuade the Chief Secretary to bring where possible the evicted tenants under the blessings of this Bill. The sacrifice we are going to make being considerable, I hope we shall endeavour to get the best security for the money we are going to spend. There is another point I would like to call attention to, and that is in Clause 1 of the Bill. I know that this is specially drawn to exclude all the great grazing holdings in Connaught and other parts, and special provision in another clause is given to enable the Land Commissioners to deal with these farms. Hon. Members from Ireland will be aware, as no doubt the Chief Secretary is aware, that there are many estates outside Connaught, which have these large grazing farms, and it certainly will not help the landlord to part with his estate unless he is assured of being able to part with the whole of the property, and not only portions dotted about the estate. Therefore I should hope that the limitations in Clause 1 may be removed. If my right hon. friend does not see his way, as regards these large grazing holdings, to give them the benefits of this Act as it is drawn, surely what money remains over from previous Acts might be ear-marked for the purpose of giving the occupiers of these farms opportunity of purchasing the land which they now hold.

The hon. Member for Waterford has specifically stated that he wishes the landlords of Ireland to remain in that country. If we wish that we must make every effort in our power to make the position of the landlord in Ireland such as will induce him to remain in Ireland. If you take away his occupation as regards the management and supervision of his estate, and if you hem him in to a small domain where shooting cannot possibly be carried on, what possible inducement is there for the landlord to remain in Ireland? We desire that he should remain. He will only remain there if you give him the same kind of conditions he has today, and if you enable him to educate his child as he comes home from school in those manly sports which he himself at present pursues. Therefore I do hope the Chief Secretary will see his way to modify the clause dealing with sporting rights. As regards sporting rights, I believe fishing rights are some of the most important of Ireland. I would like to have the fishing rights transferred to the Agricultural Board. The Agricultural Board should be compelled to offer to the landlord the first option to lease the fishing, and the income thus derived should be devoted by the Board to local purposes. I do not believe the Land Commission have the ability to give effect to the proper preservation of these fishing rights, which constitute a great asset for Ireland, not only for the landlord but also for those who come to spend their holidays in our land. I have one other suggestion to make with regard to the Bill, and that is with regard to title. The hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Healy) raised a most critical point to my mind as regards the success of this Bill when he touched on the question of the agents in Ireland. The agents in Ireland are the men at present who control the situation, and they are the men whose good-will we must secure if we wish to get this Bill to work. I do not know whether the expenses provided under Section 43 of this Bill will enable the landlords to adequately compensate the agents who have acted for them for years, and in many cases have been associated with particular estates from father to son. But I will take another case—a case which Irishmen know to be prevalent in many parts of Ireland—and that is the position of an estate where the jointures and mortgages are such that the whole income of the estate is eaten up in the payment of these charges and mortgages and the management charges of the agent—the landlord has but a nominal interest.

The owners of the jointure and mortgages are not going to sell, because when they are paid off they will have to invest their money at a less return. The nominal landlord has no inducement to sell—the agent is the only man who can bring about the sale, but why the agent is to be expected to set the Act in motion when, if he is successful in selling the estate he is doing away with his own living, I do not understand. I do hope my right hon. friend will take this point into consideration in order to remove as far as possible this hindrance to the success of the measure. The fact that I sit here as an Irishman representing an English constituency as a Unionist opposed to Home Rule, does not prevent me from voting enthusiastically for this Bill. I do not believe we shall shake by it one single Nationalist from his present adhesion to his ideal of Home Rule, but I believe the Bill will give cause to the Irish people to forget some of the sorrows of the past and wipe out the memories of those wrongs committed on one side or the other connected with the land, give an opportunity to banish the differences of class and creed, and enable all to work together as Irishmen. What greater heritage can you desire? I go farther, and venture to think that as my countrymen at Ladysmith and Colenso sacrificed their blood freely for the British Empire, hon. Members opposite, in their heart of hearts are proud of their British citizenship, and as their grievances are removed one by one, will vie with us Unionists in their devotion to the Empire, and participate as Irishmen more than ever before in shaping its government and its destinies.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): As representing a rural constituency in the North of Ireland, I feel bound to state the grounds on which I shall vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. Indeed, when I recall the history of the Land Question in Ireland, I feel at a loss to know how any Member on either side of the House can oppose the Second Reading. In supporting it, I reserve the right of insisting as far as I can on a great number of Amendments in Committee, because if the Bill were to pass in its present shape I think it would be a great disappointment, and almost a calamity to the country. But I assume that ample opportunity for Amendments will be accorded. I speak with some authority on this subject, because, although I may not rejoice in the recollection, I believe, in point of duration at all events, I have a greater experience of the Land Question in Ireland than any other person in this House. Unfortunately for myself, I can recall the time when the tenant in Ireland had no protection. As the majority of the estates were let out on tenancies from year to year, there was nothing to protect the tenant from the caprice or avarice of his landlord. When the father of a family was thrown, often in the depths of winter, out upon the roadside, when he saw the homestead which he and his fathers had built out of their own resources, and the land which had been so improved as to more than double its original value, pass into the hands of strangers, he had no protection—nothing but despair, and, too often, weak and human as he was, he yielded to desperate influences, and avenged himself by taking the landlord's life. That is the state of things I remember in the County of Tipperary, and it is that recollection that has made me watch with interest and anxiety the various steps that have been taken from time to time to remedy those evils. Whether it is pleasing or not to those who hear me, I unhesitatingly say that to Gladstone and his memory Ireland owes a greater debt than to any other statesman who figures on the pages of English history. I would remind hon. Members behind me—not referring, of course, to those below the Gangway—that John Bright was almost the first to advocate the creation of a peasant proprietary, and that the first attempt to carry out the principle of this Bill occurs in the Act of 1870, in what are called the "Bright Clauses," by which public money was pledged for the purpose of assisting tenants in purchasing the freehold from their landlords. Therefore, those who respect the name of Bright and regard that statesman as one of the heroes of the Liberal cause, should recollect that, though he afterwards opposed Home Rule, he was always in favour of abolishing dual ownership.

We come then to the Act of 1881. That Act also contains provisions enabling the public credit to be pledged under certain conditions to assist the tenant to become the owner of his holding. That was the natural consequence of the policy of the Gladstone legislation, because Mr. Gladstone, for the first time, effaced from the Irish Code of law the terrible injustice which previously existed, viz., that all the improvements of the tenants became the property of the landlord, and that the tenant ceased to have any right or interest in them. It was to that state of things that Mr. Gladstone applied his legislation—first in the Act of 1870, by giving the tenant a statutory right to compensation for improvements which he had made, and then in the Act of 1881, by enabling a rent to be fixed in estimating which the improvements made by the tenants were to be left out of account. I do not think many English Members understand the peculiar position in which the Irish tenants stood before and since the

Gladstone legislation. Having recognised that principle, the Act of 1881 created what has been called the dual ownership or co-ownership. They gave the tenant the right to hold the land in defiance of the landlord so long as he paid the rent, and in estimating the rent the improvements made by the tenant were to be excluded. The principle was just and right, and for the first time did common justice to the struggling and labouring peasantry and tenantry of Ireland. Mr. Gladstone gave certain facilities for purchase by the Act, but they were never availed of because they did not go far enough. That is an argument for this side of the House. How can any hon. Gentleman opposite refuse to adopt the principle of this Bill? In 1885 Lord Ashbourne's Act, which has done great benefit to Ireland, recognised the principle of advancing public money to enable this end to be attained. In legislation of this sort we must go by degrees, and the Act only enabled a limited sum to be advanced out of the public Treasury. That sum, being found insufficient, was afterwards enlarged, but the principle was there, and no hesitation was felt by the House of Commons of that day in pledging the credit of the nation to enable this great end to be achieved. That Act was amended in 1885 and extended, but before we come to the extending Clause, which enabled larger sums to be advanced, let me recall the attention of Liberal members in this Parliament to the fact that Mr. Gladstone in 1886 brought in the Bill which has been so often referred to in this debate. I have examined that Bill carefully to its foundation, and the principles of the Bill which is now under consideration in this House are the same in foundation and the same in principle, however they may differ in detail. That Act enabled the landlord to sell for twenty years purchase at the net rent and it enabled tenants to buy, and £50,000,000 were to be advanced out of the public Exchequer, without many of the safeguards provided by the present Bill, to enable that object to be achieved. That was, in many respects, a more risky undertaking than the present, because the interest to be paid by the purchasing tenant was at the rate of 4 per cent., which is heavier than is contemplated in the present Bill. With all due respect to my colleagues on this side of the House, I say that they cannot object to the principle of this Bill with any show of consistency. The fate of a Ministry depended upon that Bill, and hon. Members were willing then to risk their all in carrying the measure into law, and they did risk their all. It was somewhat disputed yesterday, but anyone who reads the history of the question knows that it was upon that Bill, and not upon the Home Rule Bill, that the Gladstone Ministry was wrecked.

Passing on from 1886 we have the Conservative Ministry in power, and the Ashbourne Act was extended, not in principle but in detail. In 1887 and 1891 greater powers were given to achieve this object, and larger sums were granted out of public money. There was no hesitation in passing the latter Bill, and I am not aware that it was seriously contested on its Second Reading. I rather believe that it was not contested, and although it was very much criticised in Committee the Bill ultimately passed; and the provisions of that Bill go very nearly as far as the provisions of the present Bill. Under the beneficial legislation with which the name of Ashbourne is associated in Ireland enormous advantages have been achieved, and we have it further, on irrefragable authority, that out of 80,000 peasant proprietors representing a payment of £350,000 a year, there has only been a default of about £3,000, showing that there is no need to apprehend that the Irish peasant proprietor will not keep faith with the public creditor. It was found that the machinery for land purchase was cumbrous and slow, and it became necessary to have an investigation and approval by the Court of the value of every farm that was sold. We all know that in the case of a vast number of farms there was a process of ascertaining by a public authority the annuities that could be properly charged upon the tenants, and this process must necessarily be slow and cumbrous. The consequence was that after four, five, or six years, only a very small proportion out of the number of agricultural tenants have derived any advantage, not from the want of will, but from the want of opportunity. Now, what is the proposal of this Bill? It proposes to advance £100,000,000 on the security of the whole of the agricultural land of Ireland, and it guarantees the security of that £100,000,000 by what is called the guarantee fund, which in round numbers amounts to £3,000,000 a year, and which would amply secure the whole of that £100,000,000. I will assume that there was a universal strike against the payment of annuities, although no sensible or reasonable man could ever contemplate such a thing. That seems to me to be the only objection that has been even hinted at by the opponents of this measure. Neither the mover nor the seconder of the Amendment rejecting this Bill, has ventured to say it would not be a great boon to Ireland to have the system of dual ownership abolished, and a peasant proprietorship substituted for it, but they endeavoured to create a prejudice by suggesting that the English taxpayer might be prejudiced at some future time. Past experience shows nothing more unlikely, and the provision of the Bill gives that guarantee fund of £3,000,000 a year which can be closed upon to meet any deficiency.

I have no hesitation in grasping this opportunity for going a step farther for the amelioration of Ireland. I should be sorry to assume that this Bill will be a final settlement of the Irish Question. I should be very sorry if I thought it would be a final settlement, but I regard this Bill as a measure that will almost remove the remaining ground of discontent and complaint so far as it arises from the relations between the landlord and tenant in Ireland, and that relation has been the bedrock of all the troubles, all the difficulties, and all the miseries which Ireland has gone through for centuries. It is a step in the direction, and an almost final step in the sense of the evolution of those principles which were initiated by Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1870 and the measures which followed it. I claim it as such, and I am sure that the principle of it is right, and it ought to be passed unanimously and *nem. con.*, so far as the Second Reading is concerned, by this House. But saying that, I wish to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the key to this Bill is the bonus to the Irish landlords — a more meritorious body of men never existed, and I say that fearlessly to the Irish Members below the Gangway We know that the present, and that the last generation of landlords are suffering more or less from the sins of their forebears, and for the extravagances of their forefathers, and that most of them have come into heavily encumbered estates by reason of which it is as much as they can do to keep the wolf away from the doors. I hope, and it will be necessary, to increase the dole or grant of £12,000,000 to the Irish landlords. I think it should be £20,000,000, and I am satisfied that before the Bill passes this House it will be £20,000,000. But be it £20,000,000 or £12,000,000 you must fix the purchase annuity at such a low rate that the tenant will be able to pay it for sixty-eight and a half years regardless of changes of time and circumstance. The men of Ireland will be loyal and prudent and economic. I cannot finish the sentence, I do not want to intrude upon the House after the allotted time, and therefore I must sit down.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MIDLAND, BELFAST, AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the instruction which appeared on the Paper in his name was in no way hostile to the Bill which had gone to a Committee upstairs. The promoters of the Bill, however, took some objection to the form in which the instruction appeared, and as they had sent him a written statement granting all he asked he would beg leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Instruction, by leave, withdrawn.

IRISH LAND BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to question [4th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time," Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): I have intervened in this debate because I did not want to give a silent vote in the division which is coming on, and because I do not wish it to be thought the English Liberal Members of Parliament sitting on the back benches are not in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill. I therefore desire to give one or two reasons why I shall vote in favour of the Second Reading. I do not think we ought to run away from this Bill in a fright. The people of this country appear to be in a quiescent state, I have had no letters complaining of the Bill or any adverse petitions of any kind. That is not because the British elector has no interest in this matter, or knowledge. He has both knowledge and interest in granting to the Irish freedom from the present impossible position in regard to Irish land. I want to show, according to my own view at any rate, what is the feeling and sentiment of the elector, and what is in his mind with regard to the Second Reading of this Bill. He knows Ireland has been for many years in a disturbed and discontented condition. He thinks that is from two causes; first, because it has been misgoverned for many years—and that is politically true—and that, as a chief result of that misgovernment, Ireland of to-day—whatever it once was, or might have been if it had had fair play —is now almost purely agricultural. He knows that, except in the north-east corner of the island, there is no industry but that of agriculture, and he concludes that if its people are to live by work they must work on the land, the cultivation of the land being the chief trade. The British elector knows that those who owned the land have always been in a strong position when the Irish people sought to hire it and to try to live out of it. The English elector thinks that the landlords availed themselves of the great demand for land and a limited supply of it to rack-rent the tenants for many years past. Then, again, he is familiar with such terms as "moonlighting," "agrarian outrage," "rack-rent evictions;" all these he credits to the land system. He is familiar with the consequent conflicts between the Government and the participators in these offences and their sympathisers. He has seen soldiers called out to evict tenants from their holdings, and the Government thus acting on the side of the landlords, and for some years he has asked himself what is the cause of all this, and why should the Government help the strong against the weak, and he has come to the conclusion, rightly or wrongly, that in most cases high and impossible rents have caused these troubles. He naturally associates landlords with high and impossible rents. He then asks himself why are rents high and impossible in Ireland and not in England? and finds his answer, first, because in Ireland there is practically no occupation but that of tilling land; and an Irish peasant must have land, or starve, or emigrate. Second, because there are more applicants for farms than there are farms, that therefore, the demand exceeds supply, and the rents become impossible.

Then the British elector remembers that tenants have done all the improvements on the land; that they built houses and fences, and made drains; that they reduced wild bog land into cultivable soil; and not only paid rent for these improvements, but paid increased rent because of them. The British elector is, after all, an intelligent person, and he knows a real hardship when he sees one. He recognises this Irish case as one. Then he sees political risings—"1848,"—Fenianism,—perpetual Coercion Acts, aggressive Land Leagues, and no-rent manifestoes, and all these matters he connects with the land wrong. That is why he accepted land legislation which interfered with the so-called sacred right of contract. He doubted the existence of a free contract. He does not trouble himself as to how far this particular Land Act goes. He recognises that the evil is not yet cured, and he says, "What's the use of nibbling at this cherry? Let me see if you cannot present to me a cherry that I can swallow whole. I recognise that the land is the chief cause of most discontent in Ireland. Show me a plan to put an end to that once and for all, and I will listen sympathetically to your suggestions." He starts, therefore, with a strong inclination to accede to a plan which shall have this effect. He asks himself, "Will this Bill remove the chief causes of irritation?" The answer is that it will abolish landlordism at any rate. "So far so good," says the British elector. "But what about the gilding of that cherry that I have to swallow whole?" And then he is faced with a loan of £100,000,000 and a free grant of £12,000,000. I think what sticks in his gills most is the £12,000,000. But when he is told all this money will not be wanted at once, and that some of it can be found by saving in Irish administration, in consequence of this proposal, he is, I think, easier in his mind. Again, he does not like legislating for sixty-eight years. He begins to reckon that he is leaving a legacy to his great-grandchildren. And he knows that a thousand things may happen in sixty-eight or seventy years. Here again he is consoled by being informed that in sixty-eight years the payments will cease and the liability of the tenants be wiped out, and that he need not fear repudiation, for that under similar Acts, now in operation for some years, the Irish tenant has faithfully paid his rent. Then he draws upon his own common sense, and argues that if landlordism is removed the tenant will gradually become the owner. Then will begin the natural workings of conservatism. The tenant will have something to conserve for the first time in his existence, and he will take care of it. The full support of law and order are the best means to that end, and he knows it. If I dare be a prophet I would say that this legislation, added to the natural conservatism of the Roman Catholic faith, will build up in Ireland the most conservative peasantry in the world. The British elector thinks that he may safely leave moonlighters and agrarian outragers to the tender mercies of the new owners of the little farms themselves. On the whole, therefore, I conclude that the British elector would say, "I will agree to your principle, so read your Bill a second time, but I shall require you in Committee to satisfy me that your financial schemes are correct, and that I shall get an honest return for my money." Therefore I shall vote for the Second Reading of this Bill.

I shall expect the Government and supporters of the Bill to confirm in Committee their contentions that the Irish tenants are not called upon to make unfair sacrifices, that the money which the State is going to lend shall be really and truly secure, that the £12,000,000 is to be gradually expended, and that the savings from Irish administration will really provide the bulk of it, and that the landlords shall be reasonably recompensed for their land, but not extravagantly, as the present proposal appears to provide.

MR. WOOD (Down, E.): I venture to detain the House for a few moments while I endeavour to offer a few observations upon this Bill. [Cries of "Speak up," from the NATIONALIST Benches.] I do not propose to give my support to this measure because of any official position I may occupy on this side of the House. I do not intend to give it only a minimum of support, although, as a fact, the adoption of such a measure will be to me a very striking and very great pecuniary loss. In that respect I differ from the position occupied by the Solicitor-General of England in this matter, because whatever happens to this Bill four quarter days in the year will remain for him. This is a Bill which, at least in my constituency, has not received very much enthusiasm. It is a Bill that is recognised by the farmers and labourers of Ulster to be but a feeble effort on the part of the Government to meet the position in Ulster, and, indeed, in Ireland; but we recognise that the Bill is an attempt on the part of the Government to clear away obstacles to progress, and that the near future will see us free of the curse which has hung over us for centuries. At the same time, I admit the Bill possesses many merits. It provides for universal occupiership in Ireland, and it provides money for the purpose of getting rid of the landlords. I can recognise the difficulty the Government must have had in introducing such a Bill as this. When we remember on this side of the House that there are in the Government five Irish landlords, the difficulty of the Government must have been extreme to meet this question in a way which was fair and reasonable to the Irish tenant farmers and to the labourers, but it is a remarkable fact that there is no Member returned to this House from loyal Ulster who dare go and ask for the support of the men of Ulster in the agricultural constituencies, who did not declare himself in favour of universal and compulsory sale. There is not a Member, except the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh—whose illness I regret - there is not a single Member for Ulster on this side of the House who is not in favour, at least at election times, of compulsory sale.

In the last election, when the hon. Member for North Fermanagh was returned to the House, we had an Ulster landlord contesting the seat, and his motto was "Vote for Craik and the land for the people," but the electors preferred occupying ownership to the land for the people, and they preferred to send my hon. friend here because they believed he was with them, of them, and would look after their interests and secure them in the ownership of their land. The Bill provides a substantial sum to carry the programme into effect; it lends the money at a rate of interest reasonable and fair, and for that the Irish tenant is obliged and grateful to the Government. In addition to that it provides a sum of £12,000,000 to help to bridge over the gap that exists between what the tenant can afford to pay and what the landlord can be reasonably asked to take. It does more—it may seem strange speaking from this side of the House for an Ulster representative, representing a loyal Ulster constituency, to say we are as anxious as any hon. Member on the Irish side of the House to see substantial justice done to the old soldiers of the land war. They have at last attained their majority, and it is quite time that the Government that had put them out of their holdings should aid in putting them back, because, remember, it is by their suffering and sacrifice that we in Ulster are here. We recognise that and know the benefits we have received through their sacrifice and suffering. So for as we are concerned, and I speak for my Party, we are prepared to aid and assist the representatives of the evicted tenants and to help them to procure a settlement of the great question which has so long agitated that part of Ireland.

There are great merits in this Bill, but there are also serious defects. So serious are those defects that neither my hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone nor the hon. Member for North Fermanagh dare go back to the people of Ulster unless we have an assurance from the Government that these defects will be remedied and cleared out of the way. That is our position in Ulster to-day. The Ulster farmer has found out his strength, and he is determined to see this matter settled on fair and equitable terms. He is willing to pay an honest price, and a fair price, to get rid of his landlord, but not a farthing more, and he was not prepared to have a measure passed into law to take away the rights and privileges he at present enjoys. We recognise that Ulster landlords will not be so willing to sell as they are in the south and west; we believe that they will be the last to go; we believe that in the south and west they have been able to supply their own compulsion, but we in the north prefer or preferred to have compulsion by Act of Parliament. In that belief largely the Ulster farmer is doubtful whether or not his representatives should support this Bill and see it right through. They have actually expressed the fear that the Irish Party, having secured for the farmers in the south and west their holdings, and having got them out of bondage, they might wish not to give their aid to the farmers and labourers of Ulster. It is extraordinary that they have that great fear that the Irish Party will not continue to help them to get rid of this curse, which has enslaved them for so many years, and which is as bad in Ulster as in any other part of the country.

There is a further objection, and that is as to the interference with the Land Act of 1881. I should like to see the Attorney-General go down to North Derry and speak against the Land Act of 1881 as he did last night. I should like to hear the opinion of the "purple heroes" of North Derry upon the charge against the tenant farmers and labourers of North Derry. It is fashionable in this country for a Chief Secretary, in addressing a meeting of Primrose Dames, to abuse the Act of 1881 and the author of it, but we in

Ireland, who know the benefit of that Act, and know what we have gained by it, and know the sacrifices by which that Act was placed upon the Statute-book, remember that that Act was obtained by blood; we remember the service rendered to us by the great statesman who rolled away the stone from the sepulchre which entombed the Irish farmers. The tenant farmers do not care to forget the name of Gladstone and the work he performed for them. Had the Land Act of 1881 not been placed upon the Statute-book, and had Irishmen not laboured to obtain it, the Irish landlord would have been easily settled with to-day. What did that Act do? It took account of the partnership between the landlord and tenant in the holding. Previous to that, the tenant did all the work and the landlord took all the profit. It allocated to the landlord what was his property and to the tenant what was his, and it declared that the tenant's property was not to be taxed in the interest of the landlord. It was the maladministration of that Act that caused further outrage and fresh agitation. The northern farmer has suffered as much by reason of the maladministration of that Act as the farmer of the south and west. Let me illustrate this: A farmer in North Down built a small addition to the existing house on his farm. The Land Commission took that into account as directed by the Land Act, and they came to the conclusion that the tenant's house was far too respectable for the size of the holding, and it was assessed to the extent of £25 a year. That was remedied by the Land Act of 1896. That tenant had been paying £25 more than he was justly entitled to pay upon his own property and capital. He has been looking forward to the present year when he can go back to the court and avail himself of the great Magna Charta of the Irish tenant provided by the Act.

Now there is the question of the maximum and minimum price. In the interest of the State it is necessary to fix a maximum price beyond which the landlord and tenant cannot go. But why fix so high a maximum as that stated in the Act? In the County Down, on the estate of the Marquess of Londonderry, holdings have been sold to tenants at twenty to twenty-three years purchase. The price is paid in land stock which, at the present reduction, is only valued at £90, and without bonus, and yet the Government, with full knowledge of that, propose to fix a higher price than that at which a Cabinet Minister has been selling his land. Why then has the Government fixed upon a higher price than that? To fix a minimum price seems to me to be absurd and ridiculous in the extreme. Does the Government think the Irish landlord is unable to look after his own interest? Do they think he cannot drive a hard bargain? Why not put him under the control of the Lord Chancellor, who has charge of all infants? That is the position Ulster's representatives must take on the question, and the sooner the Government know it the better. The proposal cannot be defended, and it must not be defended if the Government want to get the Bill through and to retain Ulster.

On the question of mines and minerals, why should the tenants who purchase under this Bill have these reserved? Is this a censure on the previous legislation of the Government? The tenants who are to purchase under the Bill are to give the full value of the landlord's interest in the holding. Why should they not have every right of the landlord? Besides, they are to become owners of their farms. Are they not entitled, as owners of their farms, to the enjoyment of their property—for the opening up of mines and quarries on a farm would cause the farmer to live off the farm. There would be no security or fixity of tenure for the Irish farmer. The Irish farmer must be retained in the home, which is endeared to him by many and loved recollections, and no company or syndicate must come to take down the property of his fathers, and around which there are hallowed associations. The question of the one-eighth has already been spoken of by many Members who have addressed the House. I join those who have spoken in favour of the decadal system. I ask that the Land Act of 1896 should be embodied in this Bill, so as to give the tenant the opportunity of looking forward for ten years for the purpose of getting further relief. Now, with the prices ruling for agricultural produce, he will be in a better position to pay a larger sum, and he will have the opportunity of laying up a store for the time when there may be some agricultural depression, and when the wages of the agricultural labourer will rise, as they must rise, for they are too low at the present time. The tenant must be in a position to pay the agricultural labourer a living wage. My hon. friend the Member for South Antrim will no doubt be heard on the question of the labourers. The private secretary of the Chief Secretary was sent down to the South Antrim election to promise free homes for the labourers. Where is the performance by the Government of that promise in this Bill? If the Government are sincere on the question of the labourers, let them consult the friends of the labourers and they will be glad to aid and assist them in formulating a Bill. We ask the Government to aid and assist in passing a measure for the relief of the agricultural labourer, and to place him in a position as partner in the land with the tenant and to aid and assist in working out the salvation and regeneration of our country—a country whose people are devoted to plain living and high thinking. Then you will have a people of whom you may be proud; Ireland will be a strength to the Empire and not a weakness, and you will have a nation of brave men and fair women.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): It is a great pleasure to me that the first words I have the honour of addressing to the House should be in support of the Second Reading of a Bill which, in my opinion, will confer incalculable benefits on my country. It is a mistake which has too frequently pervaded this House that only to hon. Members opposite belongs the right of speaking on behalf of the Irish people. We Ulster Members, on this side, claim the right to speak on behalf of the farmers and of the labourers of the north of Ireland. I entirely dispute the claim set up by the hon. Member for South Tyrone to be the representative of the north of Ireland farmer. I claim for myself, as representing an Irish constituency in the north of Ireland, as much right to speak on behalf of the Ulster farmers as either the hon. Member for East Down or his leader the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The hon. Member for East Down remarked that the Ulster farmer has just discovered his strength, and that nothing could be done in this House without his assistance in matters connected with Irish land affairs. The hon. Member will only have to call his memory back a few weeks to a certain Convention held in Belfast to discuss the terms of the Bill, to remember that on some observations made by a certain ecclesiastic gentleman who addressed the meeting, his leader, the hon. Member for South Tyrone, informed him in a very few words that they had no power at all unless they attached themselves to hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong; I said nothing of the sort. What I did say was that it was necessary that the tenantry in the north and south of Ireland should move together in this matter.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG: My recollection of what the hon. Gentleman said was that without the assistance of hon. Gentlemen opposite the farmers in the north of Ireland had no power whatever.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I never said anything of the sort.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG: If I have been misinformed I withdraw. Having disposed of the hon. Gentleman's speech, I will proceed to criticise the Bill without controversy with my hon. friend the Member for East Down. Now, Sir, I think it is admitted by everybody who has had to do with the land question in Ireland, that the system of dual ownership, which has existed from time immemorial, has done more to retard the progress of Ireland as a whole than any other thing. I am glad that every representative in the north of Ireland is agreed on that point. The partnership—if indeed one can call such a combination a partnership, in which one partner has had practically no rights beyond the right of making a precarious livelihood out of the land he tills, and in which the tenant is allowed to invest his capital and labour, but, at the same time, is liable to be deprived of both at any moment at the mere will or discretion of his landlord—is one which was bound to bring in its train all the misery and discontent which has dogged the system from time immemorial. I think that certainly every Unionist Member from the north of Ireland will accept that proposition, and then we have to add to that disadvantage a Government which, up to the time of the Union was so rotten that it was a byeword to the whole world, and which since the Union, I am sorry to say, has not been a great deal better. Since the Union the Government of Ireland has been vacillating and uncertain, showing at one moment firmness, and when the results of that firmness had shown themselves they at once relaxed into slackness and weakness. Under those circumstances, the wonder is, not that Ireland is backward and discontented, but that Ireland exists at all. The hon. Member for East Mayo told us in his speech yesterday that the Act of 1881 converted the tenants of Ireland from bondsmen to freemen.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I said it was the first step in the conversion.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG: In any case, I am glad that the Act of 1881 had at least one redeeming feature, but I do not admit that that was the redeeming feature of the Act. I will tell hon. Members in a moment what I do think was the redeeming feature of it. My idea of the Act of 1881 is, and always has been, that it was one of the most unfortunate Acts ever passed for Ireland except in one particular, and that particular was that it has reduced the state of Ireland which existed prior to 1881—which was, in all conscience, bad enough—to such a chaotic and deplorable condition that at last we have come to the point when not only the Irish Members are agreed, but English Members also of all shades of opinion, that the system of dual ownership must disappear once and for all. Bad as the Act of 1881 is, it deserves our thanks for bringing about that consummation. That Act may have established a system of land tenure in Ireland, but it established such an intolerable condition of constant litigation that no words would be too strong to condemn it Prior to the passing of that Act there were landlords and tenants who looked upon each other with mutual respect, but the measure swept all that away, and from that year down to the present time there has been nothing but friction and discontent. I will not go so far as to say there has been mutual hatred, but certainly there has been mutual distrust between landlords and tenants. We have arrived at the time when that must cease, and I am glad the Government have stepped forward, and have taken the bull by the horns, and brought forward this Bill, which, I believe, will with moderate Amendments carry out this great reform in land tenure in Ireland which everybody, whether Englishmen, Irishmen, or Scotchmen, most heartily desires. I hope the Government will be able to see their way to increase the grant-in-aid from £12,000,000 to £20,000,000. If they can, I shall be quite prepared to vote for compulsion all round, but I cannot see on what principle the Government can impose penalties on the tenants without doing the same to landlords. The Bill, so far as I understand, is supposed to be a voluntary Bill, and therefore the restrictions contained in Clause 17 are to my mind absolutely inconsistent with the principle of the Bill.

The last point on which I wish to touch is the question of the labourers. There is an old story, I cannot vouch for the truth of it, that when the Almighty was creating this world and came to the Sahara Desert he was so weary that he stopped work when he had half finished it. I think the same story might be applied to the right hon. the Chief Secretary who has expended all his energies on the purchase clauses of the Bill, and when he came to the question of the labourers he was too fatigued to finish it. I agree with several hon. Members in saying that it would have been better not to include these three scanty sections dealing with the labourers or to have invited some Member of this House who is more intimately connected with the labourers question than he is, to deal with it The three sections are absolutely inadequate, and there can be no settlement of the Land Question which does not include the settlement of the labourers' question. The Chief Secretary, in introducing the Bill, said that the labourers question was, after all, a minor one. I admit that it is a minor question, but it is one of the greatest importance, and I have myself pledged to see that it is properly dealt with in the Bill. There is at present on the Statute-book a long series of Acts dealing with labourers in Ireland. They were meant to enable decent houses to be provided for the labourers. The same defect runs through them all, too many formalities are required before they can be brought into operation, and it costs as much time and trouble to erect a labourer's cottage in Ireland as to carry through a Strand improvement. There are certain things in the different Acts which are wrong, and which should be amended in the present Bill. What is more important, however, is the simplification of the procedure by which the Labourers Acts can be put into force. I hope the Chief Secretary will accept the Amendments which will undoubtedly flow in upon him in a proper spirit, and incorporate them in the Bill. I wish to touch for a moment on the question of the evicted tenants, although this is a class of people with which we in the north of Ireland are directly interested. Seeing that this is a great conciliatory measure which is intended to settle the Land Question once and for all, I would join with my Ulster colleagues most heartily with hon. Gentlemen opposite in asking the Government, I do not say to reinstate the evicted tenants, for it is impossible in every case, but to help them. This would complete the measure and heal, once and for all, all sores. We Unionist Members are therefore willing to support hon. Gentlemen opposite in their Amendments on this part of the Bill, provided they in no way interfere with the men who are at present in the evicted holdings. The question of Home Rule has been touched upon by several Members. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have told us very plainly and frankly that they do not consider this Bill, when passed into law, will check Home Rule, but, on the contrary, will act as a step towards Home Rule. They must be allowed to act on their own opinions, as we on this side of the House must be allowed to have ours. I believe that if this measure is passed into law it will push back Home Rule, as the Ulster Members understand it, still further into the distance, if it does not render it impossible, and dispose of the question for ever. I am glad, however, that at this early stage of the discussion of the Bill, it has been made absolutely clear, whether it staves off Home Rule or not, that the measure is to be discussed on its merits. There is one other matter to which I wish to refer—the graduated scale of bonuses proposed to be applied. I believe that that finds as little favour on this side of the House as on the other. The chief object of the Bill, I imagine, is to induce the large proprietors to sell their properties, and to create as many tenant proprietors as possible. If that is so, I do not see for what reason the Government have proposed this graduated scale of bonuses. The £12,000,000 to be given as bonuses should be applied equally to all landlords, whether they hold land producing £500 or £20,000 per anuum.

*Mr. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I think the House of Commons is to be congratulated on the additions which have been made to the Irish ranks in our midst, and if I may presume to do so, I congratulate my two hon. friends opposite on the speeches which they have just delivered. I notice that diverse historical views have been expressed as to what has led up to the situation in which we find ourselves; but I wish to say at once how very cordially I agree with the hon. Member for East Down in the view he has taken of a very considerable defect in the Bill, that is, the section dealing with sporting and mineral rights. This Bill proposes to abolish dual ownership of the land in Ireland; but to abolish dual ownership of land and preserve dual possession, by this confusing reservation of sporting and mineral interests, is an absurdity, even in Ireland; and I hope that that absurdity will be eradicated from the measure. I have considered and reconsidered this Bill with all the interest born of a sincere desire to do my best to promote the industrial interests of Ireland and the social peace of that country. For the importance of the measure lies not only in regard to its bearing on the social peace of Ireland, but also in regard to the economic prosperity of that island. What has been the occasion of this Bill? It has been, in a single word, the violent contrasts which have been experienced in recent years in Ireland between the lot and the rights of those who have acquired their property under the Purchase Acts, and the lot and rights of those in their immediate neighbourhood who find themselves in a situation lower in legal status, and worse in financial position through no fault of their own. In introducing the Bill the Chief Secretary said that "an overwhelming majority of the landlords and tenants in Ireland desire that the system of purchase shall be universally extended." That testimony is all the more important from the fact that the right hon. Gentleman gave it when he was bringing in a Bill which, I fear, does not practically effect anything of the sort. My sympathy is with the object and principle of the Bill; and I, for one, could not take upon myself the responsibility, in view of the social conditions of Ireland, of the history of that country, and in particular in view of the recent events which have led to the present situation, of declining to give a Second Reading to a measure of this kind.

How does this Bill propose to give effect to the principle of extending the system of purchase universally in Ireland? I say without hesitation that this Bill does not extend the existing system of land purchase in Ireland; it creates for the first time a new system of land purchase in Ireland of a kind and on a scale vastly more onerous to the tenantry of that country than ever heretofore experienced; and it is not compulsory. I desire to give the result of my observations on both these points. In the main it is a purchase measure. The principle remains in so far as it gives effect to the idea of abolishing dual ownership; but when you have said that in regard to the relation of this measure to what has gone before it, you have practically said all. How can you predicate the success of a measure of this kind, if the terms proposed for the tenantry are so heavy and so burdensome as to impose upon them the risks of an enormous speculative transaction, as to which three-fourths of the rural population will be bound for two-and-a-half generations. The safety of this measure depends upon the terms of the bargain which it imposes upon the tenantry of Ireland, and I, for one, shall do all in my power to mitigate what I conceive to be the harshness, the severity and the rigour of these terms, and put the tenants under a better scale of payment. Something has been imported into these discussions which is not helpful to reaching a good result. I totally object to the cavilling at the Act of 1881. That Statute is one of the most enduring titles to honour of the illustrious statesman who passed it; and to-day we are, in an increasing measure, recognising the magnitude of the task he undertook and the boon he granted. The Act of 1881 is the Charter of the tenantry of Ireland; it is the creator of tenant right. What was its great offence? It was that it, once and for ever, put an end to the system of continuous confiscation of the labour of the tenants by the landlords. Are we not all indebted even to-day to the Act of 1881 for furnishing a standard and a datum for all our calculations in regard to the Land Question down to this hour? The hon. Member for Great Yarmouth says that he supports this Bill because it is in some degree a make-weight for what he is pleased to call the "economic collapse" after 1881. I say that there was no such thing. The collapse was the collapse of an unjust right, and the substitution for that unjust right of a system of equitable possession and of the reward going to those who had earned it. I protest against my right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland talking of the situation of the landlords after 1881 as one surrounded with exasperation, and speaking of the landlords going impoverished. One would have thought to hear him that prior to 1881 there had been a paradise in Ireland, so magnificently described by the last speaker, in which the landlords were the natural friends and guardians of the people of Ireland. Was there no agitation in regard to the relations between landlords and tenants before 1881?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): What I said was that the Act of 1881 had surrounded the agricultural population with exasperation and litigation.

*MR. THOMAS SHAW: Well, there are worse things than litigation: there are more primitive kinds of conflict. Litigation is a kind of quarrel in which there is an arbiter who will settle the matter, but the exasperation which preceded the Act of 1881 was not an exasperation of litigation but it was an exasperation of a much more troublesome kind, and many a landlord would have been glad to substitute for that exasperation the litigation which subsequently ensued. Under the Act of 1881 an assured position had been created for the tenantry of Ireland, for they secured a re-adjustment of rents and the fresh assessment of these at particular intervals; and I do want to know —and I hope the Chief Secretary will attend to this matter, which has been mentioned at least a dozen times, when he comes to reply—what defence the Government can offer for penalising under Section 17 of this Bill a person who declines to take advantage of the operations of this measure by depriving him of his right at law under another Statute. This seems to me extraordinary. I could understand a measure which was either optional or compulsory, but here is a kind of cross-breed between option and compulsion. It is optional to decline to take advantage of this provision, but if you decline, in the exercise of the option, you will be penalised by being deprived of most valuable rights and privileges which another Act of Parliament has conferred upon you. Coming to this Bill. I do not suppose that, out of Ireland, the transactions which are adumbrated in it would have entered the imagination. It could not be imagined, out of Ireland, that at one time, and in one place, two people should meet, and one should buy for one figure and the other should sell for another figure the very same thing at the same moment, and then in their trouble they should appeal to John Bull, whom I take to be not only an Englishman but the representative of the three countries, and it so puzzles his brain that he says to the two persons who could not equate their relations, "This is too complicated for me to understand; please don't quarrel any more about it; how much is there to pay?" That seems to me to be the principle of this Bill. I venture to approach the Bill simply as a person acquainted with valuation and having considerable experience in litigation—that much despised art—and arbitration both in this country and in Scotland. The great point with regard to valuation of interests is to get some past experience to go upon. Now you have had experience under the last Purchase Act, and it has produced an ascertainable result. On an average, seventeen and a half years purchase was the average amount paid. But then it is said, "Oh, that is an experience happening in cases only where the person was perfectly willing to sell." To which I reply that that is the experience always. Take any arbitration or litigation with regard to the settlement of the value of land. The question is, what will a willing buyer give to a willing seller, and if you have a willing buyer coming to a willing seller during an experience of seventeen and a half years, then you have a definite datum, and can make an absolutely fair start. The next step is to transmute your moral compulsion into money, and to do this you ought just to add the usual and acknowledged 10 per cent. and no more. That is what would be done in any other country in Europe, and certainly in America, except that in America where there is a claim at the instance of a public authority they make very short work of the additional value. I want to see upon that showing how this Bill stands, and here I must dissociate myself from both sides of the House. In the first place I take the landlord's case. I must dissociate myself altogether from my hon. and learned friend the Member for South Shields, who says that we ought to drive a rigid and stiff bargain with the landlord because he has been so much favoured in recent years. I grant that he has been favoured, but I protested strongly in my place at the time against yielding to him, at the clamour of his class, a claim for £300,000 per annum, which was what lubricated the passage of the Local Government Bill. But that is now the law, and we must take the landlord as we find him. The landlord has been clothed and vested by Parliament with those rights, and I am not going back upon the principle that if I want to get at a just value I must take the men exactly in the position in which they are situated. I grant, further, that the landlord has got relief in other ways, and he has got privileges with regard to the sale of his demesne even under the provisions of this Bill; but I will take it that he has got nothing more than what the law gave him before this Bill came into being, and I find his position is neither better nor worse than the ordinary person whose property is taken from him at the instance of a public authority or a company vested by Parliament with compulsory powers. And now with regard to the tenant. Here again I dissociate myself entirely from the view that the tenant is to be put in to some kind of depreciated position because of the second-term rental having been fixed so much lower. Here again the only safe line is the line of justice and law on the basis of existing rights. The second-term rents are *de facto* the correct rentals for calculation with regard to purchase. And, therefore, what should I do in such circumstances except apply the ordinary provisions and practice in a situation in which a public authority, for public purposes, changes the nature of a man's interest and pays him in money for what has hitherto been his exclusive property. I start with my seventeen-and-a half years, and I add to that 1·7 years or 10 per cent., and I reach 19·2 years purchase, and that is the limit of it by the ordinary law; but make it twenty years purchase. After considering and reconsidering the matter, I cannot see that the landlord is entitled to one penny more. After considering and reconsidering the matter I cannot see that the tenant is entitled or bound to pay more than eighteen years purchase. I am taking in each case the seventeen-and-a-half years, or rather eighteen years purchase as the full price, and then I add a percentage from the State. For it is the act of the State as the undertakers because it is carrying on a large onerous public undertaking, and it is the act of the State that warrrants this extra payment of two years purchase. The tenant, in short, should pay only eighteen years, and the State as the commander of this undertaking should pay only two years, making in all twenty years purchase.

Now what is the finance of the arrangement under the Bill? It is as follows. It is rather difficult to get the correct number of people affected by this but I take Act, the number to be about 490,000 holdings, less 90,000 already settled and arranged, leaving in all about 400,000 holdings. This, it is assumed, gives an average rental of £10, and the result is that we are dealing with regard to this measure with a rental of £4,000,000. For that rental of £4,000,000, the State, in respect of its inaugurating this enterprise, is to give, as I have said, an extra two years purchase, and therefore the State could give a grant of £8,000,000 for purchase, and this would be for an out-and-out purchase on the very fullest terms. Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask the House, and in particular I do ask my hon. friends below the Gangway, very seriously to consider what is the result of the finance of this Bill. Instead of that eighteen years which the tenant has to pay, he has under the maximum and minimum of this Bill, to pay not eighteen years purchase but from twenty-two to twenty-eight years purchase of the second-term rent. Of course I have no knowledge anything like so adequate or great as that of my hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone on this question, but I agree with him when he says, if, instead of eighteen years purchase, you have from twenty-two to twenty-eight years purchase laid upon the tenantry, that may prove to be a load under which that tenantry will ultimately break down. With regard to the landlords' position it is still more peculiar, and it reaches the grotesque. Instead of the landlord getting only twenty years purchase he gets from twenty-three to thirty-two years purchase, with the assistance of the bonus. I will take this case at the average between the minimum and the maximum. On the average the tenant pays five years too much, that is, he pays the difference between his eighteen years which would be just and the twenty-three years which is to be charged under this Bill. And what does it mean with regard to the landlord? The landlord gets seven-and-a-half years too much, namely, the difference between the twenty years which was justly due and the twenty-seven and a half years which is the medium figure under the Bill. These figures cannot be denied and upon the footing on which I have presented them, the result is this:—the tenant is burdened with five years extra purchase, of £4,000,000 of rental equal to an extra burden of £20,000,000 put upon his shoulders, and the landlord is to receive seven-and-a-half years purchase at £4,000,000 per annum or equal to

£30,000,000. In other words it is £20,000,000 too much which the tenant has to pay, and £30,000,000 too much which the landlord has to get, and that is the scheme of the finance of this Bill.

In regard to the former part of this proposal I ask hon. Members from Ireland to consider whether it is not their duty now to protest against initiating for two-and-a-half generations a scheme which, upon all the essentials of actuarial finance, seems to point to ruin rather than to prosperity. It is a preposterous bargain; it is a speculative transaction in which everybody stands to lose except the landlord, and he can disappear with this money in his pocket leaving the tenant and the State confronting each other in very awkward circumstances. The result is that we may find in the end that the tenantry will have to face a situation after the memory of the transaction has gone in which the one salient feature of the position will be that they will be paying too much per annum and paying a sum as they think harshly imposed by the Government. If the maximum is reached the figures are far worse. If you have twenty-eight years paid instead of eighteen by the tenant, he pays ten years too much, which is equal to £4,000,000 per annum or a total of £40,000,000. If the State pays thirty-two years instead of twenty years it is twelve years too much, and that is equal at £4,000,000 per annum to £48,000,000. The figures I have given are sufficiently startling to entitle me to say here and now that I think the Irish Members will deserve every help in this House to make the finance of this Bill more in accord with the elementary principles which ought to govern the valuation of land. I wish to say finally that in my view this stupendous excess makes too great a price to pay for non-compulsion. The effect of non-compulsion will be to widen the area of what I might call the Dillon and De Freyne trouble. All over Ireland you will have cases where bargains will be made on, I hope, the minimum terms, but bargains under which the tenantry will be transmuted into owners and become masters of their own destiny alongside of cases in which such bargains have been refused. I cannot look upon that as a state of matters that will settle Ireland. My hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General for Ireland talked in a somewhat fantastic way of the retrenchment which would be effected in regard to the Irish police, on which he said they were going to save £300,000 a year. I wonder how much he would ave if the Dillon and De Freyne trouble is increased tenfold in Ireland. I see no signs of any such retrenchment in finance in that quarter, unless some scheme be devised for compulsorily taking the land in all cases where there is disorder. Fortunately Ireland gives a precedent as to what may be done in cases of social disturbance. The Lord Lieutenant appears on the scene, pronounces his fiat, suspends the constitution, and imports the police and the military. And all for the sake of not allowing the ordinary law of free meetings and the like to go on. Can we have no help with regard to this Bill from the Lord Lieutenant? I wonder if it is not possible in this Bill to add something of this kind to Section 5. I think if my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General was only of the mind to do it he might accomplish it in two hours by adding to Section 5 a proviso that wherever there was social disturbance caused or threatened by the non adoption of the Act the Lord Lieutenant could issue his fiat and make the position such that it would be necessary for the provisions of this Bill to come into operation. It looks very simple; but you will hear more of it as years go on, and unless something of that kind is done you will have recurrent trouble in Ireland. More and more the idea of universal compulsion will come forward, and more and more men's minds will turn to some compromise between universal compulsion and a case of specific policy of intervention on the ground of social disorder — such disorder as forms an overwhelming case for particular compulsion. I present that view to the House, and I think that even under this Bill it is possible for us to rearrange Section 5 and other clauses in such a way as will at all events put the Government in the position of saying that they will adopt this principle wherever social disturbance or social crime exists. The Lord Lieutenant is now vested with authority to suspend the ordinary law and import the police, and I want him to have power to make the importation of the police unnecessary by putting in a beneficent provision such as I have indicated. Let the Government introduce a clause which will bring in the Lord Lieutenant, this time not to do what the people do not want, but to do what the people do want; let him have power not to suspend the constitution but to make this constitutional measure of healing applicable to the disturbed districts. Of course all these things seem so simple as to be almost fantastic. Simple as the matter seems, and as it grows more familiar it will be more and more thought of in Ireland, and it will be found that we are not in future to treat the machinery of law and order simply for upsetting law and order, but surely also for a purpose for which it was created, viz., giving the whole tenantry of Ireland the benefit of the law in its best and most beneficent sense. Without these two things—better terms and some provision authorising some public authority to take stock of the situation and get the Act adopted in cases of social disturbance —I think the Bill may prove a leap in the dark. It may provoke even wilder jealousies in many localities than past history can show. But there are in this Bill the bones of a skeleton which, if properly clothed may be productive of great good, and if the measure is suitably amended, a happier day may yet dawn for Ireland, when industrial prosperity and social peace will take the place of the present unrest and distress.

COLONEL WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorganshire, S.): I am prepared to support this Bill, not only on account of the national spirit, which I contend is as strong on this side of the House as it is on the other, but also on behalf of my constituents in the principality of Wales. The Government, in introducing it, have shown that while busily engaged in knitting together our ties of Empire beyond the seas they are not unmindful of the Celtic fringe on this side of the Atlantic. Some twenty years ago it was my lot to be serving with my regiment in Ireland and on the staff of the then Lord Lieutenant. It was a time of great anxiety, and from my knowledge of the country at that period and from my sad experience of the wholesale evictions which took place in the year 1882, many of which it was my duty to attend, I should never have thought it possible that anything like the conciliatory spirit now prevailing among all classes could have been brought about. I take, therefore, this opportunity of tendering my sincere thanks and congratulations, not only to the representatives of the landlords but also to those representatives of the tenants who sat in the late Conference at Dublin, for, doubtless, it is principally due to the tact and ability shown by the nominees of the people that conclusions of so satisfactory a character were arrived at. I believe it is largely owing to the work of the joint conference of landlords and tenants that this Bill has been framed and introduced. Ireland herself is to be congratulated on having, at this most critical period of her history, a Chief Secretary with the heart to resolve, the head to conceive, and the hand to execute. I shall vote for this measure, feeling that those I represent have embarked their money in a thoroughly sound business undertaking, and if any hon. Members have doubts on that score, I think they must have been reassured, not only by the admirable speech delivered by the Chief Secretary on the First Reading of this Bill, but also by the explanations we received yesterday from the Attorney-General on the financial side of the question. The right hon. Gentleman told us that out of the £25,000,000 already invested in land purchase in Ireland, only £3,000 now remained in arrears, and that it was probable a good deal of even that comparatively small sum would be received.

I repeat it should not have been stated both in the Press and on public platforms, that the sum of £12,000,000, to be provided by this country in order to ensure the passage of the Bill, constituted anything in the nature of a bribe to the landlords. Surely it is just as much a contribution to the purchase price of the tenants, for we have (1) the reserve price of the landlord; (2) the offer of the tenant, while the bonus given by the State completes the bid, a bid for the priceless possession of peace and concord in

Ireland, and which may be obtained as has already been mentioned by my right hon. friend the Member for North Armagh, at about one quarter the cost incurred by the construction of one viaduct.

Sir, I conceive no good purpose would be served were I to go into the history of Land Legislation in Ireland during the last twenty years, or the unhappy results it has produced; they are too well known, not only to hon. Members of this House but also to the general public outside. I would like, however, to put one question to my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary in connection with the financial proposals of the Bill, I should like to know what position the Remainder Man will find himself in should it become law. I myself am what may be called a Remainder Man and, curiously enough, my partner in the trust with which I am connected happens to be the noble Lord who presided with so much ability and success at the recent Land Conference. My question to the Chief Secretary is this: "In the event of the vendor being tenant for life, will that portion of the bonus of the free grant which goes to him be at his absolute disposal or will it be vested in the estate trustees?" I am given to understand that my noble friend will have the absolute disposal of this sum, and if that be the case, I should like very much to know where I come in, for I clearly foresee that while my noble friend and his former tenants are waxing fat on the proceeds of the bonus, the day may arise when I, who ought to have participated in these good things, will, the only discontented man in Ireland, be wandering about the streets of Limerick soliciting alms for the poor Remainder Man.

Sir, I deplore the suggestion that this Bill has been brought forward for any political purpose or with the object of in any degree promoting the repeal of the Union. It is most unfortunate that any such statement should have been made. I am a patriotic Irishman, and the only object I have in supporting the Bill is to secure agrarian peace in my country. No one can foretell what the result of the Bill will be from the political point of view, but I hold that it will certainly bring about a more satisfactory state of things generally and a better feeling than has existed for many years past. Ireland, too, in her altered circumstances, will learn that no national independence can subsist without due regard for social organisation, the absence of intimidation, or the curtailment of individual liberty. Undoubtedly there is at the present moment a sincere desire for peace and goodwill, a sentiment which, I believe, has found an echo in the hearts of many of those living on this side of St. George's Channel, and a yearning that Parliament will set its seal on the goodwill which has already been commenced. Personally I feel with regard to this Bill that there is absolutely no alternative to offer, and if we do not adopt it, then we shall have to go back to the unhappy condition of affairs which has prevailed in Ireland for so many years in the past. I, for one, shall vote for it with a light heart and easy conscience, justified with the knowledge that I am not only acting in the best interests of those I represent, but following my own inclinations as an Irishman whose family has never been absentee but for generations dwelt on the soil it owned, which has ever identified itself with the local life of the people, and I am proud to think on the occasion of every election before the Union, contributed a Member to the national Parliament of Ireland.

*MR. MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston): I fear that what I have to say will be somewhat out of sympathy with most of the speeches which have been delivered in this debate, because, whether they have been in favour of or opposed to the Bill, there has been manifested in them a tendency to regard this measure as a very great and noble effort, coming at a particularly favourable crisis. I cannot regard the Bill in any such light. Its appearance did not surprise me. It seems to me that a Bill, or I ought rather to say a proposition, of this kind, which would very likely be taken up by a Unionist Government, must have been felt to be inevitable by any person who studied the history of economics in Ireland during the last ten years. It has been suggested—and I confess I was touched by the eloquent language of the hon. Member for East Mayo on this point—that it is the result of some wonderful spell of peace that has come upon Ireland as though breathed by an angelic ministrant. But when one comes to consider what it is to which that language is applied, one feels that such language may be spared. The origin of the measure is found to be a meeting of representatives of tenants and landlords in Ireland, at which resolutions were come to that the landlords should, if they chose, be paid a large price for land which was to be sold to the tenants, if they elected to take it at a price which required much smaller annual payments than they are now paying as rent, and that the burden of the arrangement should be borne by an absent party. Bear in mind that in each case it is an option, not an obligation. Really, I think it is not a wonderful thing that the representatives of these two parties should vote in favour of these valuable options without obligations being given to them when the burden is to be borne by a third party, namely, the British nation.

As a representative of the nation which will not benefit by this proposal, but which will have to bear the burden, I have always watched Irish questions with the deepest sympathy, and I have found with great regret that they are always discussed in this House either with passion or with sentiment—both quite fatal to good legislation. If sentiment means a desire to consider the feelings of those whom the legislation touches, then sentiment ought always to be present in our debates; but if sentiment means yielding to a vague feeling of desire, not educated by knowledge, it is a bad guide. I feel satisfied that when we come to consider this subject quietly and clearly we shall find two things: first, that this is not a crisis which we ought to seize for the purpose of making a gigantic experiment, unknown in the history of the world, in order to get what I think will be a doubtful good; and, secondly, whatever be our opinions about the Bill, that it is very unfair that this measure should be passed without consulting those who are to bear the expense, viz., the British nation. And this second point goes to the root of the Motion that is now before the House. What is the meaning of this Bill being brought in now? The Bill is one which will only slowly be put into force. It is an optional Bill. If the desire to avail of the option does not last with the tenant or with the landlord, the Bill in future years will be barren. Why, then, can you not wait until the nation has been consulted, before you bring in a Bill the working of which will depend on the temper of the people, not at the present moment but some years hence? I will tell you why. It is because no Government could go to an election with the weight of this Bill on its shoulders. It is said that the English nation do not understand Irish questions. That is the best of all reasons for not risking £140,000,000 upon a suggested solution of an Irish difficulty. The nation would want to know whether the change to be effected was of such paramount importance that a vast outlay and risk of this kind must now be incurred in precedence of all other wants of the nation, and I doubt whether you would be able to give a satisfactory answer to such a question to the electorate of England.

I want to examine quietly but thoroughly the desirability of this Bill, from the point of view of what now exists in Ireland, and what you are going to make this gigantic experiment to settle.

I have listened with the greatest interest to the references to the Act of 1881. The greater part of those references have alluded to the Act as though it were a temporary nuisance that fortunately is now to be swept away. Such is not my view, and I was glad to hear the hon. Member for East Mayo speak of it as the commencement of legislation in favour of the tenants. It is far more than that. It fixed those very rights which we are now thinking of commuting, and it did it in such a way that by no manner of means can the property of the Irish tenant in his land be either diminished or transferred to another by any act of his landlord. By that Act the Irish tenant became as definitely and completely an owner of his land in the sense of being free from the fear that the product of his labour or the land on which he expended it would be taken from him as though he had been made a freeholder. I quite admit there have been abuses of the Act, but I think I shall be able to show that those abuses were not due to any defect of principle, but to a radically bad system of administration. After long consideration, I have come to the conclusion that, if you want a free and unencumbered peasantry, the very best thing is to have fixity of tenure, with a rent fixed by an external power that fixes it on the principle of a fair rent. The proposed scheme of land purchase does not effect this. I know that the picture that is always drawn of the Land Purchase Acts is that of a man paying his instalments year after year, and then, when the last instalment is paid, having the unencumbered freehold of the land. Is that the result of land purchase? Long before that time comes, one generation at least will have passed away. Probably the whole of the savings of the man have been invested in the farm, and he has to leave, not to one, but to each of his children, some portion of the little he has thus put by. That little is to be found in the farm. The consequence is that the farm has to be burdened or sold. You cannot make a peasantry permanently wealthy; you can make them permanently entitled to the possession of land and the right to cultivate it, but you cannot make them permanent unencumbered freeholders.

What is the difference between the ultimate position when they have purchased their land under the proposal of this Bill and the position under the rights given them by the existing Land Acts properly administered? It is this. A tenant under the Land Acts properly administered has a permanent right to cultivate his land without the expense of purchasing his farm; but a tenant under a system of freehold proprietorship, whether it is a peasant proprietor or any other, can cultivate his farm only after he has purchased or rented it and—if you are going to prevent renting, only after he has purchased it. But if there is a difficulty in regard to adequate cultivation under a system of small holdings, it is that the tenants have not the capital necessary to get the full result from the land. Are you going to better that by a system of tenancy under which they have to acquire their land before they can cultivate it, when, if only properly administered, they already have a system whereby they have not first to acquire in order to cultivate? I can assure hon. Members that if they carefully consider the position of peasant cultivators under the two tenures they will find that the probability is that those under a freehold tenure will be in a far inferior position to those holding land on the principle of fair-rents. One speaker lamented the fact that where you have small holdings you have mortgages, and he thought that that might be restrained. Why, without mortgages small holdings would be impossible. Where would the tenants get the money to acquire their holdings?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. and learned Member, but I should derive much more information from his speech if he would address himself to the point that the instalments by which the tenant is to acquire his holding are less than the rent.

*MR. MOULTON: I can assure the Chief Secretary that I have not forgotten that point, and I am going to deal with that presently. What I am pointing out is this: You are asking England to go into a huge experiment, risking, as I have shown, £120,000,000, and giving £12,000,000, for the purpose of changing the tenure from the right to cultivate at a fair rent, without using capital to acquire the freehold into a universal or *quasi*-universal tenure under which the tenant will have the freehold, but he must pay for it by mortgaging the property, or borrowing the money in some other way. I say it is, at all events, a very grave question whether the tenure under the Act of 1881, properly administered, is not far better than that of the encumbered freehold, as it must be encumbered, in the hands of a peasant proprietary. The encumbrances on small freeholds, especially when, as in this Bill, there is a limited right of mortgage, will be due to money borrowed, either to acquire the land or to cultivate it, and the interest that will have to be paid on that money, especially when you are prevented from giving the land as a security for the money, must always be at a high percentage. It has been found in connection with almost every system of peasant proprietary that there have been mortgages and liabilities to money-lenders which have produced grievous financial and economic difficulties. At all events, it must be admitted that it is a very debateable question whether the proposed system is better than the existing system if properly administered, and certainly the continuation of the present system involves no expenditure or risk of national capital.

Let us, for a moment, consider whether the defects of the Act of 1881 are such as to justify universal condemnation. My feeling about it is that, if properly administered, it gave at one stroke the complete charter of the Irish peasant. What is more, even though under this Bill you may have, dotted all over Ireland, patches of land held under other tenures, the security that the tenant will never fall back into the position of an over-rented man will always be the 1881 Act. The defect of that Act was that instead of adopting the principle of fixing the fair rent in kind, so that when you had once got the rent of the holding settled it would automatically adjust itself with the price of produce, you allowed free litigation at the end of every fifteen years, just as if the plot had never been valued before. If a system had been adopted by which the natural produce of the land under tillage was noted, and the variations in price of such produce automatically fixed the rent, substantially the whole of this litigation would have been obviated. The condition of the land at the end of the fifteen years ought to affect the rent neither for good nor for evil. If you raise the value of the land by cultivation the rent ought not to be raised, and if you neglect it the rent should not be lowered. If such a system as that which I have described, had been adopted all through Ireland, there would have been a fair rent determined from time to time automatically and without litigation, the payment of which would have rendered the tenant as secure in his holding as if he had been the freeholder. I know the Chief Secretary believes that by this reduction he is going to put the tenant in a better position than he would be in under a fair rent, because he is going to take off, he says, 10 per cent., I say 25 per cent., of the second term judicial rents. But even thus he does not give to the tenants the security of a fair-rent tenure. He is going to take it off once for all, and who would say what the price of agricultural produce will be twenty years hence? Prices may go down so much that the rents fixed to-day will be as crushing as were the rents of old. The only ground on which the Irish representatives, of the tenants are right in accepting this Bill, is that they get an immediate reduction of 25 per cent., and they know perfectly well, just as we know, that if the price of produce falls, so that the instalments are too heavy for the tenants to pay, England will not dare enforce payment no matter what arrangements had been made. Therefore, the bargain we are asked to enter into is to consent to an enormous immediate reduction of rent, without any security that it can be paid. Of course the proposal is gladly accepted by the Irish tenants. No wonder the Bill is popular in Ireland—it ought to be. No wonder the Irish representatives fight for it—they ought to. But I speak on behalf of a part of the United Kingdom that is not in Ireland. You are asking us to go into this huge land speculation with the certainty that if prices go up we cannot raise that which the tenants will have to pay, and with the certainty that if prices go down, we dare not exact that which they promised to pay, and no man can look ahead for sixty years and say that that is a prudent bargain for the British nation to make.

These considerations take away any enthusiasm I might otherwise feel for a system of land purchase. It is costly and risky to the British nation and is not so good for the tenants as the present system if properly administered. If half the ability that has been shown by the representatives of the Irish constituencies, and if the skill which they have thrown into piloting through systems of land purchase had been thrown into getting rid of the two real mischiefs of the administration of the Act of 1881—first the *de novo* valuation after each fifteen years, and secondly, the crowd of officials, surveyors and lawyers who live on that Act, and keep up litigation—if they had expended half that ability and skill in the working out of that Act, which I consider gives a more perfect system of protection for the poor peasant, I feel satisfied that, so far from being glad to get rid of the Act of 1881, the peasants would feel that it was in very truth, as intended by Mr. Gladstone, the real defence of the poor.

So much for the question as it affects the tenants. Now, let me turn to the landlords. Here is a Bill introduced only a few months after the suggestion of the scheme it embodies was first made. It is introduced in the middle of a Parliament which, at its election, never dreamt of such a thing as this. This Bill as brought in is framed as a Landlords' Relief Bill and not as a Tenants' Relief Bill. The terms it secures to the landlords are such as they could never get by free bargaining. I am satisfied that if the British nation at an election had to pronounce upon these terms, there would not be the slightest chance of getting them accepted. Let me ask the Chief Secretary what defence there can be for a Bill for promoting the purchase and sale of land in Ireland, the very first enactment of which is that not only shall not one penny of the bonus go, but not one penny of the money to be lent under this Act shall go to carry out a purchase from a landlord who does not insist upon twenty-two years purchase. That is the very first enactment in this Bill. Unless he insists upon twenty-two years purchase not a single penny of this £12,000,000 shall go to assist a landlord to sell his land. And yet the average number of years purchase in sales under previous Land Purchase Acts has for many years past varied between seventeen and eighteen. In the face of this do you think that any argument will persuade the British people that this is not a Bill for the purpose of preventing the landlord from selling his land cheap? How can you get over this? Why should the Bill say that you are not to use that public money which we are asked to provide except in the case of bargains which are five years more than the average of free bargains? I know that in a debate like this one must restrain one's self, but if you look closely into this question you can see plainly that this Bill has to be rushed through in order that landlords may get large prices for their land. These prices I have shewn are far beyond those obtained by landlords who came in under the former Land Purchase Acts. Why should anyone have better terms than those settled by free bargain. Nothing could be stronger than the long succession of returns issued year after year upon this point, which show that the proper number of years is seventeen or eighteen, and whenever it comes to a higher figure it is because it is reckoned in depreciated land stock. Yet here we have a Bill that insists upon these terms being exceeded on the part of the landlords before it gives them the assistance of any public money.

I understand the support that is given by the Irish Party to this Bill, and I do not blame them at all, and least of all do I attempt to criticise politically their conduct. I feel that in political management and in understanding how to take advantage of the weakness and the strength of a representative system we are all amateurs compared with the Irish Party. We have seen them during all these years supporting a cause against which was arrayed the whole of the wealth and power of England. We have seen them bit by bit getting their own way, and now they have come to obtain the last and final triumph of their skill. They know perfectly well that this Bill cannot work out to the injury of the tenant, for they know well that if it results in payments which oppress the tenants their serried ranks will soon get the terms altered. In other words it greatly benefits the tenant at the moment, and it cannot be maintained in the future if it hurts him. Otherwise they would protest against the absurdity of the land tenure that is contemplated. The land tenure is to be this: That the holdings of to-day are to be stereotyped. They are not to be sub-let, sub-divided or mortgaged unless you get leave from a Government official. In other words, the whole administration of these small holdings will be in the hands of Government officials, and if anybody thinks that this will be a tolerable system of land tenure in the circumstances under which these officials work, representing in the eyes f the peasants an alien Government, he must be of a singularly sanguine frame of mind. That is the land tenure you propose to set up. Nor am I surprised at the support that the Bill receives from the Irish landlords and their friends. The future success or failure of the arrangement with the tenants does not concern them. The money which is going to be paid to the landlords for the whole purchase is going to be cash, and when once you have paid the cash away you may whistle for it, but you cannot recall it. This bargain is one which they naturally support. But those who have regard for the interests of the British nation ought to insist, at all events, upon time being given to the nation to consider this Bill. When I think of the needs of England, when I look at the wants of our towns and of the dwellers in slums, and the way in which any assistance they have has to be borne, not by the general taxpayer but probably by a very overburdened town through its rates—when I see how the most niggardly and stern economy is shown even in connection with such a thing as stimulating thrift by allowing good interest on the savings of the people, when, not only is no mercy shown but even harsh finance is insisted on in these and other like matters, I say to myself what justification is there, when we have given to the Irish peasant certainty of tenure and security against being over-rented—what justification is there for asking Parliament now to place this huge burden on the shoulders of the nation? What justification is there for entering on this enormous borrowing at a time when Consols in three or four years have fallen 20 per cent., when our expenditure is so high and the difficulty of borrowing so great that it looks as if this money would be lent to Ireland at less than it costs us to raise it? I see no justification for it, and I am satisfied that the country will not either. Those hon. Members who sit on the opposite side will support the Government because it is the Government, but that is a very different thing from getting the support of the nation. The nation has never been asked its opinion of this proposal, and the only time a similar Bill was put before them the people at once stamped it with their disapproval. Feeling as I do how many other things there are which are more pressing, I say that if you have no better scheme than this, if you have no other scheme whereby this tenure will be set up on more reasonable terms without making this demand on the national credit, then you ought to wait. I am satisfied that the constituencies of this country will say that we should not cripple powers of dealing with other national needs simply to jump at a bargain whereby the landlords of Ireland are so grossly overpaid.

*MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock): I am certain that the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman will not convince the House, and I am equally confident that the hard-headed farmers of the Launceston Division will know very much better on that point than the hon. and learned Member. Knowing that the present condition of things cannot fail to cause unrest and dissatisfaction, surely it is the highest statesmanship to endeavour to remove it. The hon. Member for Launceston has trotted out again the accusation of this measure being a Landlords' Relief Bill. We heard a great deal of that sort of thing during the last session of Parliament.

Only yesterday we heard the hon. Member for Bedfordshire call it a landlords' dole. Unfortunately, whenever there is a proposal in this House to promote the welfare and the interest of the tenant farmer, hon. Members opposite can always be found ready to hinder the passage of such a measure of justice by crying "landlords' dole." I do not stand here as an advocate for preferential treatment to either landlord or tenant. It may be that under this Bill too favourable terms are proposed for the landlord, but if that is so I venture to submit that is a question to be dealt with in Committee, and not upon the Second Reading. I rose principally in this debate for two purposes. In the first place, as a British agriculturist I wish to congratulate the Irish farmers upon having within their reach a settlement of the Land Question on the principles laid down in the Bill before the House, and I venture to say that though good security to the tenant farmer is valuable security, the ownership is still more valuable, and more likely to call forth the greatest capabilities of the occupier in the development of his holding. My second purpose is to tender to the right hon. Gentleman my congratulations for the courage and statesmanship which he has shown in introducing this great measure. Never, in my judgment, has such an opportunity occurred to settle this difficult problem on a permanent basis. Owners and occupiers, and, in fact, the united Irish people, are anxious for a settlement on just and equitable lines, and I cannot think that this House would be justified in refusing to approach the question with a determination to settle it on a satisfactory and just basis. There are details in the Bill which I think will require considerable amendment, but that is a matter for Committee rather than for the Second Reading. I confess that I listened to the various Amendments foreshadowed by the Leader of the Irish Party with considerable apprehension but I believe that if we approach these matters in Committee with moderation the difficulties which present themselves at first sight will be overcome, although I feel that while my constituents are anxious for a settlement of this question, they will not consent to assume the responsibility that will devolve upon them under this Bill unless it offers a fair prospect of being a permanent settlement. I will not attempt here to review previous land legislation for Ireland, for I admit that land purchase under the Ashbourne Acts has been successful. Nearly 80,000 tenants who have purchased their holdings under that Act are prosperous, and, as shown by the statistics given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick, these tenants have greatly increased the productive power of their holdings, and they possess better dwellings and enjoy increased prosperity. I think that we should be neglecting our responsibilities if we did not use this tangible proof of prosperity to further extend the system. If the agrarian difficulty in Ireland is to be settled this Bill is inevitable. I am convinced that there is no alternative, and because I believe that this Bill will promote the prosperity of Ireland I support it, and I do so also because I dread to think of the consequences that may follow if the hopes that have been engendered by the very moderate discussion of this question in Ireland are dashed to the ground.

The hon. Member for Launceston makes a great deal of the cost to this country. Like the hon. and learned Member I depend for my position in this House upon the votes of the electors, and I am not afraid to go and tell the electors that the cost of this Bill will be £390,000 per annum, and at the same time we shall be saving on Irish expenditure £250,000. I have every confidence that the electors will be satisfied that to secure justice to Ireland, and secure what we hope will be a permanent settlement of the Irish Land Question, it will be well worth the expenditure of the money which I have stated. Personally I am persuaded that the security is good. I know that doubt exists upon this point, but surely this can be made quite clear in Committee. Before I sit down I should like to refer to the charge brought against Unionists of inconsistency in supporting this Bill, whereas we felt it incumbent to oppose Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1886. In reply to that argument I would remind hon. Members that that Bill was part of a Home Rule scheme which we believe would have proved injurious to England and Ireland alike. I know there is a difference of opinion on that point, but I maintain to give effect to this scheme of voluntary purchase is to consistently carry on the Unionist method of dealing with the Irish Land Question. Hon. Members who make this charge little realise that the great hope and desire of Unionism is to help to promote the prosperity of Ireland, to join in the uplifting of the nation, and to enable the Irish people to enjoy to the full the advantages of being part of this great Empire. Therefore I feel quite justified in voting for this Bill. We intend to do everything we can to bind the Irish people to this country in bonds of loyalty and kindred association, and I think this Bill will be a step in that direction. Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1886 compelled the tenant to purchase, and there was a much greater temptation to refuse to pay the instalments thereunder than there will be by the voluntary purchase provided by this Bill. I maintain that the very position of things under this Bill will conduce to that end. There is truth in the statement that the Irish farmers are being offered better terms than are now enjoyed by the English farmer, but I have faith in the Unionist Party. Everything that has been done in late years for the English farmers has been done by the Unionist Party. I support the Unionist Party in this attempt to do the Irish people justice, and then look to them to do the English farmers justice also I would like to see a system of land purchase in this country. I believe that this Bill will create in the breasts of Irishmen a sense of security, will lead to the greater development of the country, and will remove that friction between the agricultural classes which has, in the past, distressed the land and retarded progress. I intend to vote for the Bill.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I am glad to have an opportunity to say a word in favour of this Bill, and especially so because of the opposition that has been shown on this side of the House. The hon. Member for the Launceston Division seemed to think that the Act of 1881 was the "be all and end all" of legislation on the Irish Land Question. Every one who knows anything about Ireland is aware that there is endless litigation under that Act which cannot be got through. It pleases neither landlord nor tenant. Under it the landlord has seen his rents twice reduced, and is looking forward to a further reduction. He is consequently dissatisfied, and the tenant is also dissatisfied, because, at the end of his fifteen years tenure, he is not inclined to make his holding look too good; he is always afraid to put on its best clothes, so to speak, or to put on any air of prosperity for fear of his rent not being reduced. So that dual ownership, which was necessary as an intermediate step, is breaking down. My hon. and learned friend also said that the position of the tenant under dual ownership was far better than that of the occupier of the land. He cannot have read the remarkable Report recently presented to the House. That report shows that with regard to what is produced on the land, the condition of the tenements, and the standard of living, there has been a great advance all along the line. Then, particularly on the question of encumbrance, that Report shows that instead of these occupying owners becoming more and more encumbered, they are less encumbered. In one way the landlords are getting too much under this Bill, but then the rent of land in Ireland is not like the rent of land in England. The two cases stand on very different grounds.

This Bill is a non-compulsory Bill. I wish it were a compulsory Bill; but hon. Members opposite are pledged against compulsion, and if you are to have a non-compulsory Bill, you must have terms that will induce the landlords to sell and the tenants to buy. The landlords say they must have the same income in the future as in the past. In my opinion the encumbered ones will get more, but you must level up rather than level down. If you level down this Bill will have no effect, and if you pass a Bill on these lines it must be on the line of levelling up rather than down. It is very difficult for a non-technical man to arrive at the rights of the case. Some look at the number of years, but I would rather look at the actual reduction to the tenant. Is it not the case that the number of years' purchase must vary according to the terms on which the money is borrowed? I am a supporter of the principle of the Bill, and I am not what a Member of the Government called a "minimum supporter." Whatever may be the Party in power this is not the time for heroic measures. There is a great deal to be said for evolution rather than revolution. The Irish question is the greatest Imperial problem that has yet to be solved. The heart of the empire must be sound, and it cannot be sound so long as Ireland is disaffected. Ireland has too long been a political nightmare and a source of unrest to us. It must be generally admitted that the differences between landlord and tenant are the chief irritants, and it must be conceded that land purchase is probably the best method of meeting the difficulties that face us in Ireland. The spirit of this Bill is accepted by all parties in Ireland. A great deal has been said about the unpopularity of the measure in this country, but on the other hand, I am quite sure that the great heart of the people of this country is sound as regards Ireland, and if they see a chance of having the question settled they will not grudge the money. On the other hand what will happen to this empire if we meet this Bill by a *non possumus*. Who would dare to contemplate the results that would follow such an attitude; and who would then like to be responsible for the government of Ireland? The present state of affairs has been called a "truce of God," and I am glad to think such a phrase can be used with truth for the first time in a century. I ask hon. Members on this side who oppose the Bill what is their remedy for Ireland? It is said this state of things is a mere subterfuge—a pretence to make a raid on the British Treasury. I think it is impossible to simulate unanimity except on the basis of some principle in which all believe. I do not think much about the bonus, but the loan is a very large matter, and it is right for the sake of the taxpayers that we should take every possible measure to ensure success, and to see that we have proper security. The real inducement to the landlord does not lie in the face of the Bill, as many landlords have considerable mortgages on their estates at higher rates than 3¼ per cent. The weakness of the Bill is that there is no compulsion. It is said you cannot draw a Bill containing compulsion, but you can draw one containing a penalty on the landlords not selling in the same way as is imposed on the tenants in Clause 17. I think the bonus must be equally divided whatever it is. My real doubt is as to whether the tenants will be able to pay up their instalments. Land-hunger still exists in Ireland, and where it exists it must make the tenants weak. We ought not to make the terms too high, because if we do there is a great danger of the Bill breaking down before twenty years go by. I am informed that the Land Commissioners have in the past refused to ratify bargains under which second term rents are to be reduced merely 10 per cent. Such terms have in many cases in the past been reduced by the Land Commission, and we ought to be very careful on that point in the future. I think that 10 per cent. as the minimum reduction ought to be increased, at any rate, to 15 per cent., and if the bonus we have to give on that account is more, then I would rather we gave £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 more, than that the arrangement should break down and we risk the loan of £100,000,000.

A great deal has been said as to the effect of this measure on Home Rule. If Home Rule, or a demand for autonomy, rests on the fundamental fact that there is a difference between the English and the Irish people, then something in the nature of autonomy will come, but if that is not so, the demands will die down and the matter will not trouble us, and, thank God, the bogey of Home Rule will not trouble us in the constituencies. I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the way in which he has dealt with the difficult problems which underlie the question of Irish land, and I most heartily congratulate the Irish people on the remarkable manner in which they have come together in this matter. The present state of affairs in Ireland has been called a "truce of God." My fervent prayer is that it may not be a truce only, but a permanent peace.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

And, it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 6*th May*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Scarborough Gas Bill; as amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill, read a second time, and committed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban district of Athy and the rural district of Naas (No. 1), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Dromore, Holywood, Larne, Lisburn, Newry, Newtownards, Portrush, and Warrenpoint, and the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, and Down, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Armagh, Clonakilty, Fermoy, Kinsale, Lurgan, Macroom, Midleton, Portadown, Queenstown, Skibbereen, and Youghal, the Counties of Armagh and Cork, and the Kildare Drainage District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban district of Athy and the rural district of Naas (No. 1)." Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 181.)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Dromore, Holywood, Larne, Lisburn, Newry, Newtownards, Portrush, and Warrenpoint, and the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, and Down. Presented and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 182.)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill, To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the urban districts of Armagh, Clonakilty, Fermoy, Kinsale, Lurgan, Macroom, Midleton, Portadown, Queenstown, Skibbereen, and Youghal, the Counties of Armagh and Cork, and the Kildare drainage district. Presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills and to be printed. (Bill 183.)

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 4).

MR. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills, That the parties promoting the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill had stated that the evidence of Walter Tomes, of 6, The Grove, Hammersmith; and James Joseph Rayner Green, of 12, King Street, Hammersmith, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Walter Tomes and James Joseph Rayner Green do attend the said Committee to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Ordered, that Walter Tomes and James Joseph Rayner Green do attend the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills to-morrow, at half-past eleven of the clock.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B.)

MR. TENNANT reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at twelve o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Middlesbrough Corporation Bill. Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Elgin, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Newtown (No. 1); Oakengates; White Rose; Arral Griffin; Mardy; Tredegar; Pochin (No. 1); Blackwood; Whitworth (No. 2); Clyde; Longton (No. 1) Lodge; Sandford Hill, Longton; No. 1 Pit, Wheatsheaf, Pendlebury; Newtown (No. 2); Bonds Main; Coalburn; Carluke; Leigh; Old Silkstone; Strafford Main (No. 2); Forth and Wilsontown; Church Lane, Dodworth; Grange Moor; Oldham; Wortley and Farnley; Wharncliffe Silkstone (No. 2); Bunker's Hill Lodge; Goldenhill; Kidsgrove; Halmer End; Pittshill; Audley; Rookery, Audley; Brown Edge; Burnley and Sladderhill; Talke (two); Bucknall; Harriseahead; Foxley and Kenmure; Smallthorne; Ford Green; Jamage, Audley; Roundwood; Wet Earth and Day Eye; Alsager Bank; Clay Cross; Sheepbridge (No. 1); Chesterfield; Cadzow; Gilbertfield; Llanbradach; Hill of Beath; Pleasley; Walton; Alma; Holmwood; Glasswell; Lepton; Bretby; Granville; and, Nadin and Company's Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Colchester; and, Todmorden; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Fetteresso; Baldernock; and, Logie; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Elgin, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Elgin, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Two Petitions from Eccles, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Dunfermline; Cardross; Elgin; and Carnoustie; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bridgeton; Haddington; and Perth; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Stirling, against; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Reading, against; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Murton Colliery; Lea and Holloway; Halifax; Siddal; Dewsbury; Rishton; and Netherthong; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Aberdeen; Leith; and Dundee; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petitions from Todmorden, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Stockross; and Tongham; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Petition from Hamilton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Newtown (No. 1); Oakengates; White Rose; Arral Griffin; Mardy; Tredegar; Pochin (No. 1); Blackwood; Whitworth (No. 2); Clyde; Longton (No. 1) Lodge; Sandford Hill, Longton; No. 1 Pit, Wheatsheaf, Pendlebury; Newton (No. 2); Bonds Main; Coalburn; Carluke; Leigh; Old Silkstone; Strafford Main (No. 2); Forth and Wilsontown; Church Lane, Dodworth; Grange Moor; Oldham; Wortley and Farnley; Wharncliffe Silkstone (No. 2); Bunker's Hill Lodge; Goldenhill; Kidsgrove; Halmer End; Pittshill; Audley; Rookery, Audley; Brown Edge; Burnley and Sladderhill; Talke; Bucknall; Harriseahead; Foxley and Kenmure; Smallthorne; Ford Green; Jamage, Audley; Clay Cross; Sheepbridge (No. 1); Chesterfield; Pleasley; Gilbertfield; Cadzow; Llanbach; Hill of Beath; Lepton; Holmwood; Walton; Glaswell; Bretby; Nadin and Company's; Roundwood; Agecroft; Fenton Lodge; Pencoed; Middleton; and Granville Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1902 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW CHILDREN (COTTAGE HOMES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th December, 1902; *Sir Walter Foster*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 145).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No 6.) BILL.

Copy ordered, of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Status of Storehousemen in Portsmouth Dockyard.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is now in a position to give a reply to the communication received by his Department during July, 1901, from the storehousemen and storehouse labourers at Portsmouth Docks.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) I have nothing to add as yet to the reply given on this subject to the hon. Member for Portsmouth on the 22nd April,† but the proposals for the re-organisation of the storehouse staff are in a forward state.

Brussels Sugar Convention—Invert Sugar.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it will be necessary, under the provisions of the Brussels Sugar Convention, to place the manufactories of invert sugar in this country in bond.

---

† *See* page 109.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The answer is in the negative.

Exchequer Contributions to Ireland.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the total amount in the last financial year contributed out of the Imperial Exchequer to Ireland for police, Congested Districts Board, railways and tramways, and for other grants-in-aid of local taxation in Ireland; and what would have been the amount so contributed if it had been calculated on Ireland's taxable capacity, giving in each case the amounts separately.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I beg leave to refer the hon. Member to House of Commons Paper No 256, of 1902, which gives full particulars of the Exchequer issues for Irish services in the year 1901–2, the latest year for which the information is yet available. I cannot undertake to say what would have been the issues for any of these services in that year if they had been calculated on Ireland's taxable capacity.

Water Supply of Entebbe, Uganda.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he is aware that the town of Entebbe, the administrative capital of the Uganda Protectorate, has no water supply other than water carried by porters from the lake, and that this water is contaminated by sewage; whether the local medical officers have made any recommendations on this subject; and if so, whether their recommendations will be carried into effect.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The water supply at Entebbe is receiving the attentive consideration of the Commissioner and his medical advisers. Suggestions have been made for bringing the water in pipes from some distance out in the lake and for digging wells, but hitherto the reports we have received upon the quality of the water have not been unfavourable. The local authorities have a free hand within reasonable limits, and are alive to the importance of the question.

Native and European Quarters at Entebbe.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that huts have recently been built at Entebbe for a number of natives belonging to the Uganda Marine, and their families, in close proximity to the houses of Europeans; and whether, with the view to combating the spread of malaria, the Foreign Office will direct the removal of these huts to another site.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The question of the situation of the native settlements at Entebbe is receiving the careful attention of the Commissioner and the principal medical officer, who are in the best position to judge what can be done, and have a free hand in the matter.

Duties of Outdoor Postmen at Cork.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state what was the date of the last general revision of the duties of the outdoor postmen at Cork, and at what intervals revisions usually take place; is a revision now proceeding; and if so, when is it expected to become operative.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) A scheme for the revision of the outdoor force at Cork is now under consideration; the last revision took place in 1894, and a fresh revision should have been undertaken earlier. I had drawn attention to the oversight before this notice appeared upon the Paper.

Indian Railway Service.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Mr. Hodson, Officiating Secretary to the Government of India in the Railway Department, presided over the railway conference at Delhi regarding the increased employment of Europeans in the Indian State Railways, and will he state whether this conference was held with the sanction of the Secretary of State;

and whether he will take steps to prevent any race preference being shown as regards employment in the Indian railway service.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Conference met to discuss certain representations received from the Anglo-Indian Association as to the possible employment of Eurasians on Indian railways. I have no information as to who may have presided at the meeting. The Government of India have informed me that the resolutions of the Conference were referred to the railway managers, and that no action by them for the present is contemplated.

Military Courts-Martial.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of Court-martial proceedings which in the years 1900, 1901, and 1902 respectively were submitted to the Judge Advocate-General's Department in London; in how many cases in each year findings were quashed; and in how many cases in which soldiers were sentenced the punishment or part of it had been served before the findings were quashed, or before a remission of the whole or part of the sentence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The number of Courts-martial received in the Judge Advocate-General's office, and of convictions wholly quashed, were as follows:—1900, 17,711 Courts-martial, 47 quashed; 1901, 19,349 Courts-martial, 67 quashed; 1902, 14,732 Courts-martial, 47 quashed. In all cases where a sentence of imprisonment had been confirmed and then ultimately quashed by the Judge Advocate-General a certain, though never very great, portion of the sentence had necessarily been served. The cases in which sentences were quashed were, in almost all cases, due to some want of legality in the procedure.

Recognition of Services of Militia Officers in South Africa.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any of the recommendations of the commanding officers of Militia battalions that went to South Africa in 1901 have been favourably considered; and whether the services of these commanding officers have received any recognition.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The reply is in the affirmative. Three commanding officers received rewards, and in all but one of the units which went out during 1901 officers or men received rewards. Six units which went out in December 1901 were placed in the same category as those which went out in 1902, the conditions being the same.

South African War—Rewards and Promotions.

MR. YERBURGH: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what number of officers and men served in South Africa in the Regular forces, in the Militia (including officers serving with, and Militia Reserve drafted to, Regular units), in the Yeomanry, in the Volunteers, and in the Irregular forces, respectively; and what were the number of promotions and rewards conferred upon each force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I doubt if it would be to the public advantage to compile such a table as is proposed. In order to give a just comparison, the distribution of these forces in South Africa and their relative exposure to war risks would have to be estimated, those circumstances having largely influenced the recommendations of the Commander-in-Chief.

Employment of Foreigners by Transvaal Government.

SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware of the preference given to foreigners for employment by Government in the Transvaal, and to the fact that during the last few months seven Germans and other foreigners have been appointed in the Surveyor-General's Department; and if so, whether he will use his influence to obtain, if not preference, at least equality of treatment for British subjects in such appointments for the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) There is no foundation for the statement that preference is given to foreigners. Only one official of German origin is employed in the Surveyor-General's Department, and he is a naturalised British subject of good qualifications. It is not intended to employ other than British subjects in the Government service of the Transvaal.

Midwives Board.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Midwives Board, appointed under the provisions of the Midwives Act which came into force on 1st April, has held any meetings since that date; and, if so, when the minutes of such meetings will be issued for information.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Midwives Board has met several times since the 1st of April for the purpose, among other things, of framing rules under the third section of the Act. These rules when approved by the Privy Council will be published, but the minutes of the Board's meetings are for the exclusive information of the Board.

Preservation of Historic Buildings.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the proposals to erect a building in a modern style close to Shakespeare's birthplace house at Stratford-on-Avon, he will consider the advisability of appointing a committee to inquire into the propriety of establishing a national trust for the consecration of buildings of historical or biographical interest within the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I sympathise with the hon. Member in what I take to be the hon. Member's object, but I am not clear as to the methods by which he proposes to carry it out nor as to the precise meaning he attaches to the word "consecration." If this is to include purchase, compulsory or otherwise, by the State of all buildings now in private ownership which are of historical or biographical interest, the scheme seems to be impracticable. If it falls short of this it will hardly be efficacious.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

New Naval Base on the Forth—Garden Cities.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in connection with the proposed Naval base north of the Forth, it is intended to acquire sufficient land for the erection of dwellings for the officers and workpeople; and whether the opportunity can be taken to build the new town on scientific principles according to the plans in Mr. Howard's work on Garden Cities.

*The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): Until the Naval Establishments at Rosyth are laid out, it is not possible to say how much land will be available for residential dwellings. The suggestion contained in the latter part of the Question will then be considered.

West India Dock—Admiralty Stationery Store Staff.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that on the occasion of a first-class warehouseman, who was in charge of the Admiralty stationery store at the West India Dock Naval Department, being transferred to a foreign station, a labourer with only nine months' service was placed in charge of the store, whilst the claims of men with from three to seven years' service were overlooked, and whether, seeing that as a consequence a second-class storehouseman with ten years' service has resigned, he will make inquiry into the claims of the men passed over.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member's Question appears to be based on inaccurate information. The arrangement referred to is a purely temporary one made pending the arrival of a storehouseman from a foreign station, and the statement that the labourer placed in charge of the store has only nine months' service is incorrect. The only storehouseman who has recently retired was already considerably beyond the ordinary age for retirement, and was, moreover, in temporary charge of the store at the date of his ceasing duty.

Obsolete War Ships.

SIR CHRISTOPHER FURNESS (Hartlepool): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the stipulation in the disposal of obsolete war ships that the vessels should be broken up in the United Kingdom is abrogated in the case of the sales of vessels to take place on the 13th at Devonport.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The reply to the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative, but the sale will be subject to conditions which will prevent any use being made of these ships, and will ensure their being broken up within a stipulated time.

Government Contracts and the Employment of Women.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the employment of women at 12s. per week in the manufacture of sword bayonets by Messrs. Chapman, of Woodside Lane, Sheffield, in room of men who were receiving 35s. per week; and will he say what action he proposes taking in the matter.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): In reply to inquiries Mr. J. A. Chapman states that most of the methods he is using are entirely new and different from those adopted by the few other makers of sword bayonets, in some cases rendering skilled labour absolutely unnecessary, and that in consequence he is employing four women; that the statement that he is paying 12s. to women for work previously done by men at 35s. is not correct; and that he is paying the same rate as other manufacturers, both for skilled and for unskilled labour.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Have the terms of the contract been revised, or are Messrs. Chapman receiving the same prices while paying lower wages to women?

LORD STANLEY: Messrs. Chapman are fulfilling all the conditions of the contract.

Military Service in India.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can name the exceptional circumstances under which it is proposed to take for service in India men who have been enlisted for three years only.

LORD STANLEY: Circumstances may arise which might make this course necessary, and the answer given was intended to convey that we do not debar ourselves from taking such action.

Transvaal Mines.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can inform the House what legislation is now in force in the Transvaal with regard to the ventilation of mines and protection of workers; and by what means and to what extent it is enforced.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The law in force is No. 12 of 1898, and the Department of mines is responsible for its administration.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Can hon. Members interested in the question see the law?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: If there is no copy in the Library I will see that one is placed there.

Trinidad Riots.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Water Ordinance, which the Governor of Trinidad in Council recently sought to impose on the people of Port of Spain, received his sanction, and will he state the number of deaths which up to the present time have resulted from the riots of the 23rd March, and the value of the public property destroyed.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Port of Spain Waterworks Bill was not submitted to me before its introduction into the legislature. Such a course in regard to a Bill of purely local interest would have been unusual and unnecessary. The statement that the Governor sought to impose this Bill on the people is not accurate, but the whole circumstances will form the subject of consideration by the Commission which is now sitting, and it would be improper to enter on any discussion of the matter pending their report. The number of deaths which have resulted from the riot of the 23rd of March up to the 24th is fifteen. No information has been received as to the value of the public property destroyed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked whether the Governor of Trinidad was still acting as Governor.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly.

Delhi Railway Conference.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is in a position to state the views of the Government of India with reference to the resolutions passed by the Railway Conference at Delhi, in January last, recommending the adoption of certain racial distinctions in appointments to the administrative staff of the Indian State railways; whether it is intended that this policy should be applied to the other two classes of Indian railways, the guaranteed and subsidised, with or without reference to the boards of these railways in this country; whether he can state the preliminary estimate, by percentage or otherwise, of the additional cost which the carrying out of these suggested changes would entail in the working charges of the railways concerned; and whether he will lay Papers before the House on the subject.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Conference referred to met to discuss certain representations received from the Anglo-Indian Association as to the employment of Eurasians on Indian railways The resolutions passed by the Conference were circulated to the managers of the railways. No action by the Government of India has been taken, or at present is contemplated.

Famine in Central Africa.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will he state what action has been taken to protect against starvation the 20,000 people in the British Central Africa Protectorate who are affected by the famine at Ruo and Lower Shiré; and will he say what has been the increase in the mortality on account of this famine.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The scarcity is at present confined to the two southernmost districts of the Protectorate, whilst in the north there are good crops. Relief works have been organised at Chiromo, giving assistance to 200 families, and affording the means of any further relief that may become necessary. The administration is also prepared to make free issues of rice if required. It is hoped that in connection with the recruiting of 1,000 natives for labour in the South African mines, a large number of families will become independent of relief, and the construction of the railway to Blantyre about to be commenced will probably make all assistance from Government needless.

Railways in Uganda.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government propose to construct a railway from Lake Victoria to Lake Albert in the Uganda Protectorate; and if so, what is the estimated cost of such a line.

LORD CRANBORNE: No, Sir; His Majesty's Government have no such intention.

Income Tax Inquiry.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can say when the suggested inquiry into the machinery of the Income Tax, and which inquiry has been demanded for years past, is likely to take place.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am not in a position to make any statement as to when the inquiry into the machinery of the Income Tax will take place, and I would ask the House to have some little patience. As they will understand, I have others to communicate with, and the thing cannot be done in a hurry. But I assure the House that I sincerely desire that it should be done.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Will the Committee be appointed this session?

*MR. RITCHIE: Oh, undoubtedly; I hope so.

Cross Channel Transit of Irish Live Stock.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official reports showing how far the regulations made by the Departmental Committee on cross-channel transit of live stock have been carried out in respect to vessels engaged in the live stock carrying trade between Ireland and Great Britain; whether he can state how many prosecutions have been instituted for violations of those regulations; whether he is aware that complaints are made respecting the survey of those vessels; and whether he can take measures to prevent suffering being inflicted on live stock through neglect of the regulations.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): This Question is one which concerns the Board of Agriculture, from whom I have received the following reply. The carriage of live stock between England and Ireland is regulated by the Animals (Transit and General) Order of 1895, and a corresponding Order for Ireland, which embody as far as is possible the recommendations of the Departmental Committee which sat in the previous year. The trade in question is kept under close and continuous observation by Inspectors of the Board of Agriculture and of the Irish Department of Agriculture, additions to the staff having been authorised for the purpose. It is not possible to give any statistics of the number of prosecutions which have taken place for offences against the Order. They may be instituted both by the local authorities and by private individuals. As a rule, however, the representations made from time to time to owners of vessels have been satisfactorily met, and the need for prosecution has therefore not generally arisen. No complaints respecting the survey of vessels appear to have been received. The two Departments concerned are most anxious to do all that is practicable to prevent the occurrence of loss and suffering in connection with the trade, and would be glad to receive any suggestions and recommendations which those concerned may be able to make for its improvement.

Wages of the Rural Postmen in Northumberland.

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why rural postmen at Barrasford, Felton, Wark, Bellingham, and Humshaugh have not been paid the higher maximum introduced by Lord Tweedmouth's Committee; and whether he will cause the payment of arrears to be made to those postmen who were at the time of the introduction of the present scale at the maximum, or have since reached it.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): There is no question of arrears in the cases referred to by the hon. Member. The situations filled by the postmen in question will in future, as vacancies occur, carry fixed wages instead of a scale; but this alteration does not affect the present holders, who were allowed to retain their former scale with a maximum of 19s. In the course of last year it was found that the circumstances were such as to justify an increase of this maximum to 20s., and authority was given accordingly.

MR. BURT: Will the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman is about to appoint have power to deal with matters of this kind?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; they will have power to take evidence and make recommendations to me but not, of course, power to deal with them of their own motion. This is one of the kind of cases which the men by their representatives can bring before the Committee.

Glycerinated Calf Lymph.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will explain why the money paid by the Local Government Board for Scotland for glycerinated calf lymph is not shown in the Estimates under appropriations in aid; and will he state the amount thus received for the last financial year.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): No money is received by my Department from the Local Government Board for Scotland in respect of glycerinated calf lymph.

Avoch (Ross-shire) Harbour.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what sum the Fishery Board for Scotland propose to provide in aid of the construction of a harbour at Avoch, Ross-shire.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): At a meeting held in January, 1902, the Fishery Board delayed consideration of an application for a grant-in-aid of the cost of constructing a harbour at Avoch, Ross-shire, until a Provisional Order had been obtained, and the Rev. Mr. Philip was informed accordingly.

Inebriates' Home in Scotland.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that in the Vote for the Office of Secretary for Scotland there appears an item of £2,300 under Sub-head G for expenses under the Inebriates Acts, will he state the number of certified inebriate reformatories referred to, and the amount which it is proposed to contribute to each.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Up to the present the only institution certified by the Secretary for Scotland under the provisions of the Inebriates Acts is the certified reformatory at Girgenti in Ayrshire, managed by the Corporation of Glasgow. The sum expended under the head of State contributions and inspection in the year ended 31st March, 1903, amounted to £1,302 18s. 2d. Applications from other authorities have been received, but it is impossible to say how the Vote for 1903-4 will be allocated.

Lymph Supplies for Scotland.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that a sum of £155 appears in the Estimates for the Local Government Board for Scotland, under Sub-head D, as the cost of vaccine lymph and glycerinated calf lymph, will he state the entire cost of the lymph annually supplied to the Local Government Board for Scotland.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The amount expended by the Board in respect of glycerinated calf lymph and vaccine lymph during the year ended 31st March last was £120 14s. 3d.

Ulster Winter Assizes.

MR. WOOD (Down, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, if any, and what, arrangements have been made for the trial of civil business at the Ulster Winter Assizes.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): No arrangements have yet been made. Several suggestions which have been put forward have to be considered.

MR. WOOD: But is it the intention of the executive to provide for the hearing of civil business at the Ulster Winter Assizes?

MR. ATKINSON: To answer that would be to answer the Question on the Paper.

River Bann Floods.

*MR. CHARLES C. CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say when legislation for the abatement of the flooding caused by the overflowing of the River Bann and of Lough Neagh will be introduced.

MR. WOOD: May I, at the same time, ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, when he proposes to introduce the Bill to abate the flooding which has caused, and is causing, loss to the occupiers of land in the vicinity of Lough Neagh, the scheme for which was approved by the First Lord of the Treasury in the year 1888; and if he will recommend that those occupiers be relieved from their present annual payments pending the passing of the promised Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): In reply to these Questions, I shall consider the question of assisting these projects out of the funds provided by the Development Grant Bill, should that measure become law. The answer to the concluding inquiry in the second Question is in the negative.

Sligo Grazing Lands.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Sligo Rural District Council relative to the sub-division amongst small farmers and labourers of the Knocalassa and other similar grazing ranches in the county of Sligo; and if so, will he state what action, if any, will be taken in the matter.

MR WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received. The sale of the estate containing the farm at Knocalassa has not yet been brought before the Land Commission. The estate is administered in the Land Judge's Court, and any application respecting this farm, in the direction suggested in the Question, should be made to the Land Judge in the ordinary manner.

Ireland and the St. Louis Exhibition.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Irish Department of Agriculture will take steps to have a special exhibit of Irish industries at the St. Louis Exhibition.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not yet in a position to make a statement on this subject; negotiations are still in progress.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will put another question later on.

Irish Resident Magistrates.

MR. WOOD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the names, qualifications, and religion of the resident magistrates in Ireland appointed to this office within the past twelve months.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have forwarded to the hon. Gentleman a return containing this information.

Election of Petty Sessions Clerk, Co. Mayo

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state (1) when Mr. Jacob Beckett, J.P., Ballyvary, Castlebar, was appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Mayo, (2) the number of his attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions each year since his appointment up to 20th February, 1902, and (3) whether his qualification to vote at the election of Petty Sessions Clerk for Castlebar District is an attendance or a residential one.

MR. WYNDHAM: 24th October, 1899. He attended Castlebar Petty Sessions four, six and four times during each of the three years ended 19th February, 1900, 1901, and 1902, respectively. His qualification to vote at the election in question would appear to be on the ground of attendance at Petty Sessions.

Mr. Heraghty, J.P.

MR. O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the number of attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions made by Mr. Thomas Heraghty, J.P., Chairman Ballinrobe District Council, since his appointment as Chairman of the Ballinrobe District Council up to 25th February, 1903.

MR. WYNDHAM: Ten.

Irish National Schools Inspectors' Reports.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the Inspectors of National Schools in Ireland sent their reports for the year 1901 to the Board of Education.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no date fixed for the making of such reports. I will inquire as to the particular report which the hon. Member may have in view, if he will send me details.

Farranes Licensing Prosecution.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a case heard at Shandangan Petty Sessions on Tuesday, 7th April, in which Sergeant Glynn, Crookstown, charged Mrs. Catherine O'Leary, of Farranes, with a breach of the Licensing Act; whether he is aware that the sergeant, for the purposes of the prosecution, represented on the day previous to the alleged offence that he was going on leave; and that he subsequently, on the morning of the Sunday on which the alleged breaches of the Licensing Act occurred, entered through a window of an unoccupied house from which the licensed premises could be observed, and though he saw several offences against the Licensing Act committed, took no steps to prevent them; and whether, seeing that it is an official instruction to the Royal Irish Constabulary that their duties are preventive as well as repressive, will he state what action it is proposed to take in reference to the conduct of Sergeant Glynn.

MR. WYNDHAM: The facts are stated with substantial accuracy. The sergeant, in explanation, reports that the Licensing Acts were systematically broken in this locality, and that as the movements of the police were closely watched, it became necessary for him to resort to stratagem in order to cope with the evil. It would have been better had he entered the licensed premises when people were observed on them; but the Inspector-General is satisfied that he was actuated by good intentions and zeal for the public interests, and it is not proposed to take any further action in the matter.

MR. SHEEHAN: What right had he to enter these unoccupied premises?

MR. WYNDHAM: My reply covers that question.

Foreign Orders—Acceptance by British Officials.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, is he aware of the Foreign Office Regulation, dated 23rd June 1898, and now in force, which declares that permission will not be given to any subject of His Majesty to accept a Foreign Order from the Sovereign of any foreign country, except in the case of the chief of a complimentary mission, or of a military or naval attaché on the termination of his appointment, and of the established rule that no British Ambassador shall accept an Order from the Sovereign to whose Court he is accredited; will he explain how it has occurred that the British Ambassador at Rome has accepted from His Majesty the King of Italy the Grand Cordon of the Order of St. Maurice; and is it proposed in future to depart from the established practice and to rescind the existing regulations; and, if so, by what new practice and regulations will they be replaced.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am aware of the Foreign Office regulations with regard to the acceptance of Foreign Orders by His Majesty's representatives abroad; but I think it will be recognised that the special circumstances of the King's recent visit to the King of Italy justified a departure from the general rule. It is not proposed to make any change in the existing practice.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is possible, and I hope almost certain, that the debate on the Irish Land Bill will finish at half-past seven to-morrow. In that case I shall commence the discussion on the Budget Resolutions at the Evening Sitting to-morrow and continue it on Tuesday next. Monday next will be devoted to Supply.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I presume it is only conjecture on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that the debate will close to-morrow afternoon.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is hypothetical, but I think it would be greatly to the convenience of the House if it were possible to come to some such arrangement.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman expects the Budget Resolutions to be finished in an evening sitting?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not said so.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think they might be.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The arrangement is dependent upon the conclusion of the debate on the Land Bill by the dinner-hour.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer intend to force the Budget Resolutions through at an evening sitting?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Some men are optimists and some are pessimists. I belong to the pessimistic order; my right hon. friend belongs to the happier order.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Mr. Stuart-Wortley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON reported: That they had appointed Sir James Fergusson to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, at the conclusion of the consideration of the Employment of Children Bill, in the place of Mr. John Edward Ellis.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

MILITARY LANDS BILL.

"To amend the Military Lands Acts, 1892 to 1900, with respect to the acquisition of Land for Military Purposes," presented by Mr. Charles Allen; supported by Mr. Russell Rea; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 184.]

SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN AND WAR CONTRIBUTION [GUARANTEE.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have some little hesitation in addressing the Committee at this stage and in making a statement with reference to the proposed loan, because I have already presented to the House, in the form of Blue-books, all the information which directly relates to the subject; and although, of course, I am most anxious to give any further explanation which may be desired, to add anything in my power to the information already conveyed, I am afraid that, in making a general statement, I may indulge in some needless repetition and to that extent weary the House. On the other hand, I have felt that the House would probably on the whole be glad that I should make something like a summary of the whole of the circumstances which have led to the loan, how it is that His Majesty's Government have undertaken this obligation, and that I should say something more as to the present condition of the two colonies which we are seeking to benefit. I am afraid that in carrying out my intention, I shall stray a little from the direct course of the debate based on the Resolution before the Committee; but, at the same time, matters in South Africa are so closely interwoven that, if I do stray, these excursions will not be objected to seriously. Let me say, in the first place, that this loan, which is, as the Committee knows, a guaranteed loan of £35,000,000, for the purpose of the two colonies, is closely connected with the question of the war contribution. It is true we are not dealing to-day with the raising of the loan of £30,000,000, which will be required in order to pay the British Exchequer the contribution the colonies are willing to make; but the whole arrangement must be treated together;

and I might almost say that the support of the Committee to the loan which is now under consideration is indeed conditional upon the contribution of £30,000,000 to which I have referred. I think it would be most convenient, therefore, if I deal in the first instance with the circumstances attending this proposal on behalf of the two colonies to contribute the substantial sum of £30,000,000 towards the expenses of the war. The Committee is aware that during, and subsequently to, the war, the Government have constantly declared that it was their policy to secure this substantial contribution. They have done that through the mouth of my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and also in the speeches I myself have made. But we have always laid down two conditions on which alone we thought it possible to obtain this assistance for the British Exchequer. The first condition was that we do not intend to impose any additional taxation in the Transvaal beyond the 10 per cent. profit tax that we have put on the mining industry, and, as regards that, I do not think there ever has been, or can be, any difference of opinion. The whole burden of taxation in the Transvaal was excessively high. There is no other country or population or colony which is subjected to anything like the same taxation per head as the population of the Transvaal. These burdens affect, in the most serious degree, the cost of living, and the comfort, the happiness, and the welfare of the people; and I think it will be recognised that we were right, even while the war was going on, in saying that we did not intend, when the war was over, to impose a heavier burden in the shape of additional taxation upon the existing sources of revenue in the Transvaal. Of course that did not mean that the revenue was not expected to increase, but it meant that we were not going to invent new taxation for the purpose of a contribution from the colony to this country, or were going to make personal pressure on the individual in the Transvaal any heavier than it had been under the old administration. The second condition which we ourselves laid down for our own guidance and control was that in asking for a contribution from the Transvaal for the expenses of the war, we should not put upon them any obligation which would hinder the prompt and sufficient development of the country. That has always been a cardinal feature of the policy of the Government.

No one who has not studied this question carefully on the spot, or even at home, can form a conception of the extremely backward state of our new colonies—backward, I mean, having regard to all the circumstances of the cases. This is not a poor country. It is a country of enormous potential wealth, whether you look at it from the point of view of its mineral resources or of its possible agricultural productions. But in regard to both, owing to circumstances which I need not now develop, the progress made in the expenditure of the capital necessary for the development of its natural wealth has, up to the present time, been very slight indeed, and, in our opinion, one of the great securities for the future peace of our new colonies is to be found in the development of their prosperity. The first security for peace in any country is that the people shall be prosperous, and, therefore, contented. In my judgment, there is every prospect of the greatest prosperity, not only for the present population of the Transvaal, but for a largely increased population; but that depends on the development of all those accessories to industry and production which only the investment of a large amount of capital can secure. Our view has been that, in the near future, sums which I am almost afraid to name will be required, and can be profitably expended either by individuals or by the State. It is probable that, in the first instance, at any rate, it is to the State that we must look, in an undeveloped country, of this kind to find the requisite capital. That, bear in mind, has always been our experience in regard to our experiments and our great successes in colonisation. We sometimes make the mistake of attributing to our colonies and to undeveloped protectorates and lands powers and facilities which are only possessed by a rich and civilised and old country like our own. When you are dealing with these new lands, unless the State can come in and act as the beneficent landowner would act, and find the capital to develop the estate, there is no probability that in any reasonable time any good results would be attained. We have found, as

I have said, that in all our colonies, and still more our children have found it in those self-governing colonies which we have handed over to their local administration — in Australia, Canada, and South Africa itself, the State has intervened and found the capital by which the prosperity of the colony has been secured. Enormous sums are required in South Africa for the development of this vast, rich, undeveloped estate. They are required for railways. At the present moment, in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, there is little but the main lines of communication. Vast spaces of country, which is undoubtedly as fertile as any country in the world, are waiting for the means of communication before they can be brought into cultivation. What is the good of growing cabbages on the veldt which sell at half-a-crown in Johannesburg if there is no railway to take them there, and if the only way to bring them to the population in want of them is by the process of ox wagons and all the difficulties of unfinished roads. Therefore, great railway development is the first and most essential feature of any policy of the kind that I am describing. The railway must be fed by roads. I have had some personal experience of roads in the Transvaal—not, I believe, in the worst districts; but I can say that they are open, at all events, to improvement, and I have no doubt that a very large sum of money might properly and wisely be spent in putting into fitting condition these useful means of transport.

Then there is the much larger question of irrigation. In such an enormous country as I am referring to, of all varieties of climate, soil, and cultivation, it is impossible to doubt that there are, at the present time, vast spaces of land which are just as fertile as those places in Egypt which, under British rule, have been made to blossom like the rose, having previously been nothing more nor less than desert; and the one thing wanted in a great part of South Africa is water. Under anything like a proper system of irrigation, there is no doubt whatever that South Africa, which at present is depending for all the necessities of life, for its corn, for its flour, for its meat, for everything, in fact, upon foreign supplies, would not only be able to find everything necessary for its own population, but might probably become an important exporter. On the question of irrigation, the Committee will always bear in mind that I am speaking of results which have been achieved in a few weeks, and within a few months after a great, desolating war. But already, in regard to this question of irrigation, considerable experiments have been tried, and always with the best results. In some score or more of cases, employment has been found for the bywoners. For the prisoners and other members of that class who have returned to their homes, employment has been found in making dams on a small scale, to secure the irrigation of what are comparatively small areas. It is believed that when these dams are completed, those who have been employed in making them will be the settlers on the irrigated land thus created, and will ultimately become the owners of the land they themselves have thus helped to make fertile. Let me say, in order to avoid misapprehension, they have been well paid for doing it. It has not been done in the sense in which it is pointed out sometimes that it was done in Ireland, at the tenants' own cost; but wages have been paid to them in order to provide them with subsistence during a short period of temporary necessity, from which I hope they profit, not only by the wages they receive, but by their establishment on the land which they have helped to improve. That has been done in a considerable number of cases, but on a comparatively small scale. But no one who is connected with the administration of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony has any doubt that in course of time it will be most desirable that these experiments should be carried out on a large scale. In one of the recent letters I received from Lord Milner he referred to a scheme which was under his consideration for the embankment of the Vaal, which would, if it were successful, make a rich and enormous expanse of territory, and so provide means for a great additional population.

There is another source of expenditure to which I look forward as calculated immensely to raise the whole status of the new colonies, and that is the schemes of land settlement which at present are only in their infancy. Let it be clearly understood what these schemes mean. It is not an attempt by the British Government—

an attempt which would be utterly foolish and ridiculous, and which has never been entertained by any person with any knowledge of the facts—to swamp the Boer population. Nothing of the kind would be possible in my opinion, nothing of the kind would be desirable. But you have got this enormous country, at present so sparsely inhabited that over vast tracts you cannot see a house or the smoke of a chimney, which, nevertheless, has been proved to be extraordinarily rich and capable of a great and increasing production. It is desirable to bring in a larger population, in order to develop this country which otherwise must remain in its present condition. That population, so brought in, will be, to a large extent, British. I hope we may anticipate that; and that would be a good thing. I have had some experience in this matter in visiting some of the settlements already created and one interesting incident, I might mention to the Committee. In a great settlement of bywoners and others in the neighbourhood of Potchefstroom, I was told by Boers, not by Englishmen or officials, who might be prejudiced, that the settlement had already derived the greatest possible advantage from the accidental fact that a few families of Italian settlers had been placed on the same ground. I was assured that the example they gave of activity and energy, and the superior methods they brought to bear on the cultivation, had already had marvellous effects on their Boer comrades, and that the prosperity of the settlement was likely to owe a good deal to this introduction of new blood; and the same people, and others in the course of my travels, I found perfectly ready to welcome new blood, expressing a desire that in different parts of the country, where now only Boers are settled, a number of English families should be brought in to introduce new methods and to set this example of industry and of activity and generally to bring cultivation more into harmony with modern ideas and conditions. There are, therefore, four objects for which large sums of money have to be expended, and upon which I say that the greater the expenditure, and the more quickly it can be made, the more certain will it be that not only the peace (for as to that I never had the remotest doubt) but the more speedy will be the restoration of the country to its former prosperity, the increase of its prosperity and of its riches, and consequently the security which will be given by a population all of which will be in a prosperous condition.

I have said that there were two conditions which we laid down—one was that any contribution from the colonies should not necessitate the increase of the heavy burden of personal taxation already borne; in the second place, that it should leave the way free for this development of improvements which it is important to assist. I now add to that a third condition, perhaps not publicly declared before, but which I think the Committee will readily accept, and that is that any contribution which is to be made by these new colonies should be made willingly, voluntarily, and not be enforced or imposed upon them by the superior Power. I ventured when I was in South Africa to promise—at all events on behalf of my own Government, and I believe I can safely do so on behalf of the whole House of Commons—that, although technically they were Crown colonies, and, as such, subject in the last resort to any ultimatum that might be propounded from Downing Street from the Colonial Office, that the Government would treat them in all matters in which Imperial interests are not directly concerned as if they were self-governing colonies. I am perfectly certain that that is the only policy open to us. That on its own merits it will stand as a wise and prudent and an honourable policy, I do not doubt, but my point is that it is the only possible policy. You are dealing in South Africa—in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony—with a very exceptional state of things. It is not the ordinary case of a Crown colony where you have a native population, more or less, by the necessity of the case, to be treated as children. You are dealing with the Boer population to begin with, intelligent no doubt in their way, and accustomed to a great measure of independence; and you are dealing with a British population which, in my opinion, represents the very best elements of the British character, and which also, therefore, has the British love of liberty and independence with regard to its local affairs. Well, Sir, I say then that it was a necessity, in my opinion, in regard to any contribution to be made, that it should be made voluntarily. It was not to be supposed that the Boer population, our recent opponents, should eagerly come forward to contribute to the expense of a war in which they have been defeated. But I think I may fairly say in regard to them that, although they are not eager in this matter, they are practically indifferent; and during the whole time I was in South Africa, when I met again and again individual Boers and their representatives on deputations, there was only, as far as I can recollect, one single occasion on which any reference was made by any Boer to this matter of the contribution, and then it was only to suggest that the matter should be delayed, that, in fact, it should be left to be ultimately decided at a time when in the future the colony became self-governing. Why were the Boers indifferent? I think I can give a good reason for it. In the first place, the terms of surrender provide that no taxes should be put on the land, the thing in which they are chiefly interested, as a war contribution. That does not really preclude the Government of the Transvaal at some future time from establishing a land tax, supposing such a course was thought desirable; but it absolutely precludes us, as a matter of honour, from putting on any tax which would in any way be associated with the war contribution. In the second place, I may say the Boers, who generally supply their own wants from their own farms and import very little, would in any circumstances contribute a very small amount towards any such amount as might be paid over for this purpose; and any contribution that they did make would be altogether insignificant in comparison with what we are doing for the Boers in the way of granting them loans to assist them, and in the way of compensation of various kinds which we are giving them in order to enable them to restore their position. The cost of this contribution will fall chiefly on the British population, and, of course, mainly on the principal industry of the Transvaal. Under those circumstances, it is important to know what is the British feeling in regard to this matter; and to me it is a matter of some pride in my countrymen, some satisfaction to my conviction of the general patriotism of our colonial fellow-subjects, that in every case, from the highest to the lowest, there was a universal acceptance of the principle of the contribution, and a universal willingness to make sacrifices in order to meet it. That was apparent among those who are responsible for the conduct of the mining industry, upon which the chief burden will fall. It was also evident in the case of the trading and professional classes, and it was not less apparent in the case of the working classes generally. In regard to that an incident occurred which I think of great interest. When the terms and conditions of the contribution were submitted to a representative assembly, at which all classes were present by their delegates, a resolution was moved approving the arrangement, and it was carried with four dissentients. The four dissentients were two delegates of the Miners' Association and two delegates of the Trades Union Council. At first sight that seemed to imply that the working classes of the Transvaal—there, as elsewhere, the great majority—were opposed to this arrangement. But before I was a day older I received from working men and associations of working men letters full of indignant protest against what they assumed to have been the action of their delegates and declaring that they as well as any other section of the community were not prepared to shirk their obligations in the matter, but were willing to take their part in such general contributions as were thought necessary to the expenditure of the Empire. The whole thing turned out to have been a misapprehension. The four delegates of the various working men's associations did not intend to vote against the resolution. They were voting only on a minor point—the question whether a public meeting should be held on the subject—and they came to me later on with a desire that their names should be added to those of all the rest of the representatives. Accordingly, an absolutely unanimous vote was obtained from this most representative meeting in favour of the proposals which were made.

The principle of the contribution having been accepted, it became necessary to consider what should be its amount; and what should be the method of providing it. I must say here that in going to South

Africa I had in my mind an arrangement which, ultimately, I altogether abandoned. I was prepared to propose that any contribution should be considered as a charge upon the future assets of the Transvaal; that, in accordance with the conditions that it was not to interfere with the present development, or increase the present burden of taxation, we should earmark certain new sources of revenue to be derived from new discoveries, new mineral resources and matters of that kind, or from the increased product of existing taxes, and apply them from time to time as they occurred, to the settlement of the contribution in aid of the war expenditure. Of course, under those circumstances, it would have been necessary to fix the maximum, and I should have been prepared to fix it very high. In fact, I do not see how you could fix it low. In a matter of this kind, where so much is speculation, you must take into account that the development may be even greater than the most sanguine of us venture to anticipate. I was prepared to fix that maximum sum at £70,000,000 or £100,000,000. I have seen this matter referred to under some misapprehension. But it must be borne in mind that if we had fixed any sum of the kind—say £100,000,000—it would be only a deferred payment, which would have to be extended over a great number of years, which would have been small at first, although it might have increased afterwards; and, according to the best calculation I was able to make, the present value of £70,000,000 or £100,000,000 completed fifty years hence—which was the shortest time in which I thought that arrangement could be completed—would have been anything between £30,000,000 and £50,000,000. Therefore the actual value of the alternative proposal, which, as I say, I came afterwards to abandon, must not be put at £70,000,000 or £100,000,000, but it must be put at whatever may be calculated as the present value of a deferred payment, with a maximum of that amount. But when I got to South Africa and entered into communications with those who were best able to advise me, and who were most interested in the matter, I found a number of serious, and to my mind insurmountable, objections to the course which I had previously proposed to take. In the first place, an arrangement of that kind would have given no immediate relief to the British taxpayer. It would only come in from time to time, and in the first instance the sum received would have been extremely small; and the British taxpayer would have obtained no relief, either as a taxpayer, or as a person responsible in his proper proportion for the National Debt. In the second place, a scheme of this kind was, of course, purely speculative. I myself entertain the most sanguine views as to the future of the Transvaal. But other people may say that those views are exaggerated and optimistic, and it is impossible for any one to prove the contrary. If a proposal of that kind had been submitted to the House of Commons, other Members, whose judgment would have been just as good as mine, and whom I could not have proved to be wrong, might have said that a compromise of this sort was not likely to be worth the paper it was written upon, inasmuch as those large sources of revenue from which I hoped to derive these sums were not likely to arise. But from the point of view of the Transvaal and good government there was another view. Earmarking sources of internal revenue would involve, at any rate, supervision of the internal finance of the Transvaal by the British Government and the British Treasury; and every tax that was removed might lessen the security. The question, for instance, of legislation in order to secure for the State its fair proportion of the undeveloped riches of the Transvaal would have to be submitted to the British Treasury, and have to be considered—as it would be their duty to consider it—not from the point of view of the advantage of the Transvaal, but from the point of view of the probability of the Exchequer's not gaining from these sources all it had expected to obtain. I was told, and I readily believed it, that a provision of that kind, carried on over a great number of years would be found to be absolutely intolerable, would produce the greatest irritation and friction; and that at all hazards we ought to get rid of it, if possible. Lastly, I became convinced, especially when I learned more of the qualities, the great qualities, of the population of the Transvaal—that love of independence, that self-confidence which possess so

Mr. J. Chamberlain.

many of our colonies, and especially possess those active, energetic men, who have gone as pioneers of this new industry, into this new country—when I appreciated all that, I came to the conclusion that a contribution which depended upon annual amounts paid over year by year, for a period of certainly more than a generation, was a possibility which was liable to many serious objections. Taking the people as they are now, full of a lively patriotism, full of intense sympathy with the mother country, and of a deep gratitude for all that she has done for them, that, or indeed any other arrangement might have been readily accepted by them. But who is bold enough to say that thirty years hence an arrangement of this kind might not be thought very different? Political agitation might be brought to bear against what would then be called a tribute to the mother country; and, even if the agitation failed in its purpose, still the relations between the colony and the mother country might become strained.

For all these reasons I was thrown back upon the arrangement which we have adopted, which was to fix the contribution of the Transvaal at the largest possible sum which it could pay, having regard to its present resources, in the course of the next year or two; and the proposal which I ultimately made with the approval and authority of my colleagues to those with whom I was negotiating was by them—and I think I may say by the British population in the Transvaal generally—accepted unanimously. It was that the Transvaal accepted as their contribution of the British cost of the war a sum of £30,000,000, payable in three annual instalments of £10,000,000 each, which would be provided by a loan secured solely upon the assets and resources of the Transvaal, and not guaranteed by the British Government; and, in order that the success of the loan might be made assured and to show their own confidence in the prospects of this country in which they are interested, the financial groups associated with the gold industry undertook to underwrite the first £10,000,000 of the loan so as to make its issue an absolute certainty. The loan as suggested was to be a 4 per cent. loan; but before I left South Africa I explained to those with whom I was in contact that if it should appear—as I myself think it will appear—that the credit of the Transvaal will justify the issue of a loan at a lower rate of interest, we should, without hesitation, adopt the course of issuing it below 4 per cent. In that case, however, the obligation of the mining groups to underwrite the £10,000,000 would, of course, fall to the ground. We should either abandon the condition altogether as being unnecessary, or, if we desired that it should still stand, we should have to engage in negotiations with the mining groups to see how far they would be willing to accept their portion of the loan at a lower rate of interest. But that will be decided when the loan is brought forward. All I wish to say at the present time is that, although the negotiations took place on the basis of a 4 per cent. loan, it was not certain that it should be issued at that rate, because the general condition of the Transvaal might probably justify its issue on more favourable terms. What are the advantages of this arrangement? In the first place it is a final arrangement; after three years we shall hear no more on the subject. The Bill will have been paid, the claim will have been met, and we shall have no longer any ground whatever for intervention, and all interference in the internal finance of the Transvaal will have been avoided. The loan cannot be repudiated—not that I think such a course of action would ever, under any circumstances, be possible in a British colony, but under the existing arrangement it is impossible. It is not a case of repudiating an obligation to a Government, but it would be a case of repudiating obligations to all those who should have taken up the loan, to all the private subscribers; and a country which did that would, of course, almost for ever, at all events for an immense period and until it recovered its position, absolutely destroy its credit. Now, if there is one country in the world which has need of an extensive and unlimited credit it is the Transvaal. And, therefore, even if I could conceive it possible that anybody could be dishonourable enough to suggest a repudiation of this obligation, I say it would not be able to do it. And, lastly, as I have said, this contribution, large as it is—and remember it is large if you will only take into account the white population of the Transvaal and the heavy burden which they already have to bear —has been willingly accepted. Sir, I say, having regard to all the circumstances, the losses which the great industry of the Transvaal suffered during the war, some of them direct losses, others indirect, owing to the cessation of the industry—considering the fact that up to the present time they are still hampered by the lack of labour, considering the enormous burden of taxation which the Transvaal population bears, and which amounts at the present time to considerably more than £10 per head—considering all these things, I say this contribution is indeed, in my opinion, a fair and just contribution from the colony, and may well be regarded as a generous proof of the solidarity between the colony and the mother country.

Before I leave this part of the subject, I should say that I have also to deal with the case of the Orange River Colony. At the present time the finances of the Orange River Colony show an equilibrium. The colony has never hitherto been considered as a rich colony; it has hitherto been entirely an agricultural colony, and as long as that is the case it would be perfectly unresaonable to expect from it any contribution whatever towards the cost of the war. But arrangements have been made whereby the Legislative Council of the Orange River Colony will take upon itself in behalf of the colony a hypothetical liability of £5,000,000, as a contribution towards the cost of the war, to be charged upon new resources—that is to say, to be taken as a charge upon any sums which may hereafter be received by the Government of the Orange River Colony in connection with new discoveries of mineral resources. I think myself such discoveries are, to say the least of it, extremely probable, if not almost certain; and I think, therefore, that we may probably look forward to an additional contribution of £5,000,000 from this source without imposing any additional burden on the population of the Orange River Colony. But I do not press that. The arrangement is, as I have said, purely hypothetical, and I only mention it now in order to make the whole situation clear.

Now these arrangements for contribution are connected with and conditional upon the loan which I am now recommending to the Committee. That loan I prefer to describe, in order to distinguish it from any other, as the Development Loan. It is a loan of £35,000,000. Beyond that, as to the price of issue, the time of issue, and all the rest, I must leave members of the Committee to learn the particulars from the prospectus; and I am sure they will feel with me that there are obvious reasons why no premature disclosures should be made on these points. But I would like to point out with regard to this loan of £35,000,000 that the major portion of it is not a new charge upon the Transvaal. The major portion of it is required in order to discharge existing liabilities, and as a substitute for existing debts. In the first place, there falls to be provided out of this new loan, repayments to the British Exchequer. They are as follows: Advances made by the British Exchequer in aid of the Transvaal and now to be repaid. In the first place, £1,500,000, which was against a deficit in the first year of the British Transvaal administration, when there was practically very little revenue; £3,000,000, a loan granted to both colonies in order to meet the loans which the terms of surrender authorised to be granted without interest in the first instance for a period of two years, and after that at 2½ per cent., in order to enable the Boers to restock their farms and make other provisions; thirdly, £1,000,000 advanced to the Central African Railway —the railway of the two colonies—for the purpose of providing additional rolling stock; and, lastly, £500,000 for repatriation and resettlement. The total is £6,000,000 to be repaid to the British Exchequer, which, of course, forms part of the charge borne by the Transvaal towards the cost of the war; and the sum which we shall receive in reduction of our previous expenditure will, therefore, not be £30,000,000 but £36,000,000. There is another sum which I have not referred to because at present it is under consideration. The military claim from the Transvaal a sum of about £1,000,000 for works executed by them in the way of railway extension and repairs. The Transvaal Government dispute this sum.

It will have to be a matter of amicable arrangement between the authorities here and the authorities in the Transvaal, and, therefore, I take no account of it in the present statement; but possibly a sum of between £300,000 and £1,000,000 will come from the Transvaal to the British Exchequer in addition to the £6,000,000 to which I have referred. Another £2,000,000 will be repaid by the Transvaal to cover the compensation which we always declared during the war we would exact from the new colonies for the injury done to loyalists in Cape Colony and Natal by the first invasion of the Boers. This, added to the £6,000,000, makes £8,000,000. Then there are other charges for repatriation and compensation, including military receipts, of £2,000,000.

It may, perhaps, be a matter of interest to the Committee, if I am not wearying it, to know how this arises. There have been many funds, and it has led to great confusion. There have been many claims on the Imperial Government and on the Colonial Government for compensation in connection with the war. Some of those are what I may call claims *ex gratia*. For instance, the Government agreed by the terms of surrender to apply a sum of £3,000,000 as a free gift. That was an eleemosynary gift, and other sums were also applied in the same way. But in addition, there were claims as of right—claims which arose under receipts given by the military authorities for goods commandeered or used by them in the course of the war. A second and a much more difficult item were claims arising under the proclamations which were issued by Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, and, I think, by Sir Redvers Buller, promising protection to Boers who surrendered and who subsequently lost their property. When I got out there I found that besides the civil commission which was sitting to deal with matters for which the Transvaal Government and the Orange River Colony were responsible, there were a number of military commissions dealing with claims upon War Office funds—claims under receipt and claims for compensation under the proclamations. This was an unsatisfactory arrangement. Owing to military exigencies the chairmen of the military commissions were constantly being changed, so that there was no continuity of policy. When a man had got to know his business well, and to understand the kind of questions likely to be presented to him, he was, by the necessities of the case, sent home or removed with his regiment, and another man had to learn it all over again. It was estimated that to conclude the work would take three or four years at the least. There was great dissatisfaction with the decisions of some of these commissions, some of which, after careful consideration, I found myself unable to justify; and altogether the progress of the country, the restoration of the country, was being most grievously hindered by the uncertainty as to what was to be the result of all those claims and commissions; and accordingly, with the authority of the Home Government, and with the assent of Lord Milner and the Government of the Transvaal, we decided to make a new arrangement. We decided to sweep away altogether the military commissions, and to unite the whole business in the hands of the civil commission. We made a calculation which appeared to show that in addition to what had already been paid out by the military anthorities, they were still liable for £4,000,000, much of which, indeed, they might have contested, but which, if not admitted, if generally repudiated, would leave behind a sense of soreness and injustice in the minds of Boers and British alike, which would be highly injurious to the future administration of the country. Therefore, we agreed that by the payment by the military authorities to the Transvaal of £3,000,000 the Transvaal Government would take the whole responsibility on its own shoulders. In doing that the Transvaal Government assumes that the cost to it will be at least £1,000,000, probably more. But while, on the one hand, the Imperial Government secures the great advantage of a final settlement and gets rid of a business which it could not efficiently control, the Transvaal Government has the enormous advantage of being able to treat this as a matter of general policy, not merely from its financial aspect, but having regard also to the question of conciliation; and under these circumstances the charge is now entered against a new loan of £2,000,000, £1,000,000 of which certainly, and possibly a good deal more, will be required in order to meet fully and fairly, justly and generously, the claims which arose under the military operations. The conversion of the old debt which is now 5 per cent. is, of coure, an economical operation; that will require £2,500,000. In addition to that it is proposed to purchase all the existing railways, and an estimated sum—it can only be an estimated sum—of £13,000,000, is assumed for that object. The total of these sums is £25,500,000, out of a total loan of £35,000,000; and the Committee will see that the whole of this sum is not a new charge, but merely a re-arrangement of existing charges. What remains is £9,500,000. Of that, £5,000,000 are to be expended, as quickly as they can possibly be expended, in the development of the railway system. And in regard to that the Committee have before them in the Blue-book a full account of the discussion of the conference of the railway authorities at Bloemfontein—a conference which, I must say, was most satisfactory, inasmuch as it disclosed on the part of all concerned a general desire to meet fairly all the exigencies of the situation. The sum of £2,500,000, is appropriated for land settlement. I may say in the figures the Committee may have found a sum of £3,000,000, but half-a-million of that is a previous grant from the British Exchequer which is now repaid. The new sum is £2,500,000. And then public works, which include roads, irrigation works, and public buildings, and matters of that kind, are put down at £2,000,000. That makes the total of £35,000,000; and I have only to add with reference to the application of the loan that it is provided any savings which may be made, are to be applied to new development. That is to say, if we can reduce in any way, without injury to the public credit and the general administration, the sums which have been put aside either for the purchase of railways, compensation, or repatriation, the sums saved will be at the disposal of the Transvaal Government for further development in the way of railways and other public works.

Now I come to what I have always considered to be a most important matter, and it will be a very satisfactory part of my statement to learn what is the security which is offered for this loan which the House is asked to guarantee. The Development Loan is £35,000,000. I will not say a word as to the price at which it is to be issued or the rate of interest, but I must take a figure for the sake of my calculation as to the cost which the loan will impose, and I will assume 4 per cent. as the charge for the interest and the sinking fund together—that is to say the charge for the development loan will be £1,400,000 per annum. What have we to secure it? In the last resort that loan is secured on the whole of the assets and revenues of the Transvaal colony, on its gold, coal, iron, copper; all its revenues of any kind, all its vast resources may be in the last resort made responsible for the payment of the interest and the sinking fund of this loan. But I do not believe under the arrangement we propose that we shall ever have recourse to that security. In the first instance, the loan is to be a charge on what I will call the common fund of the two colonies, which Lord Milner proposes to establish immediately with an inter-colonial Council representing the two colonies to advise and to administer the finances. What is the reason for this? I wish not to minimise but to magnify the importance of this new development under the administration of the two colonies. For the first time they are to be brought together by a common purse. It is on the understanding and the belief that some of their interests cannot possibly be separated. Let it be understood that they have special idiosyncrasies of their own, and nothing would be more mischievous or unpopular than to bring the two colonies under one single government. Their traditions are separate, their modes of administration previous to the war were separate; and, though many times we have discussed and criticised the administration of the old Transvaal government, we have admitted the general propriety of the administration of the Orange River Colony. There is a great local patriotism in these two colonies as between themselves. It is not a question of Boer and British, but it is that kind of particularism which makes, in fact, one corporation jealous, in a sense, of a competitor which happens to be its immediate neighbour.

We cannot ignore it. We are not going to ignore it. It is bred in the bone, and it would be unwise not to give effect to this differentiation. But, on the other hand, there are many things which cannot be separated.

Take the case of the South African Constabulary. We have arbitrarily divided the cost of the South African Constabulary, not with regard to its proportionate advantage to one colony or the other but with some regard to the proportionate ability of each colony to bear the charge. We have charged the Orange River Colony with £250,000, one-fifth of the charge, and the Transvaal with four-fifths. But there is no such distinction to be drawn as regards any of the benefits which this force may confer on the country it is established to protect. I say here that I attach the utmost importance to the South African Constabulary as a great civilising and uniting influence. It may have been regarded in the past exclusively from its military capacity, and indeed during the war, while under military command, some of the most gallant actions of the war conferred the greatest credit on the members of this force. But I was impressed when I was there by the officers and the men that this part of their work was over; and we expect from them in peace greater services than those which they had rendered in war. We regard them not as a garrison but as the protectors and the friends of the people. If the House will consider the circumstances in which its administration has to be conducted, and the immense spaces to be covered, they will see what I mean. How can you bring under a central government and in personal touch isolated farmers hundreds of miles away across a trackless veldt? It is impossible. Their grievances, if they exist, could never come, in ordinary circumstances, to the knowledge of the authorities. There is no close sympathy between the government and the individual members of the community whom it has to control. The South African Constabulary already has made its position. Again and again I found on entering into conversation with the farmers that the men were learning the language of the country, were becoming the friends of the people, were welcomed at every farmhouse, doing little jobs for the inhabitants, carrying their letters and parcels, giving information, settling their petty disputes—so much so that in one case I had a serious complaint from one of the resident magistrates that his duty was becoming almost a sinecure in consequence of the action of a sergeant of the Constabulary settling all the differences without bringing them to his august tribunal. I can sympathise with the resident magistrate, though I could not but express my entire approval of the action of the sergeant of Constabulary. That is what is happening, and it will happen if only the spirit which prevails among officers and men continues. Therefore, I attach the utmost importance to the continuance of this force, to its permanent continuance, on the same footing on which it is at present. But if it is to be divided as a charge between the two colonies, which differ most materially in their financial resources, it may be well said by the administrators of the Orange River Colony that, however admirable this force is, we cannot afford it. On the other hand, the Transvaal, rolling in wealth, might be well able to pay for it. It must be remembered that the Transvaal is interested as well as the Orange River Colony in all that conduces to the prosperity and peace of the whole country.

Then, again, take the case of the railways. How can you separate the interests in the railways? The railways of the Orange River Colony are not mainly or principally for local distribution. They are through lines. They carry the products of an agricultural constituency to the Transvaal and the great industrial centres of Kimberley and Johannesburg; and if that is to be done it is impossible to appropriate with any exactitude the respective liabilities of one colony or the other, or the respective share or benefit which they ought to obtain. Therefore, having regard to this and other matters, Lord Milner proposes to create a common fund for the two colonies, with revenue derivable from the two colonies and with an expenditure which otherwise will fall separately on the two Colonies. One word more. I have said that I wish to magnify this first step in the new development of colonial administration.

The Committee must see that this is the commencement of the policy of federation that we have always looked forward to. I do not wish to be understood as prematurely anticipating the full completion of this policy. It is our policy, to be carried out as quickly as we think it advisable for settlement. But I attach the greatest importance to the reasoned arguments so well put by the Boer generals when they declined to join the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. In the existing state of the two colonies, where the desire of every reasonable and intelligent man is to get rid of all sources of difference and to unite and co-operate in order to restore the prosperity of the country, it would be most undesirable to provoke political agitation. Therefore, while I look forward to that crowning of the edifice and believe it may come much earlier than some of us originally anticipated, I would not like—in saying that this is the first step towards not only self-government in the Transvaal and in the Orange River Colony but towards the federation of South Africa—I would not like the Committee to think that I looked for it as the immediate consequence of what we are doing. But certainly it will pave the way to that consummation and enable us to gain considerable experience. Meanwhile the service of the loan will be a first charge on the net revenues of the Central African Railway. In the Blue-book it will be seen that that revenue is put by Lord Milner at at least £2,000,000 sterling. In a later despatch or telegram which I have received from him he feels that he may now confidently say that it will not be less than £2,500,000; and really one of our difficulties has been how to deal with the extraordinary growth which we have to chronicle and which comes upon us as a constant surprise month by month as we proceed with our return. Lord Milner has always erred, if at all, on the side of caution in his estimates, and we may take it, therefore, that the revenue of the common fund will be 2½ millions; and that is estimated after the reductions which have been made by the Railway Conference in connection with the present exorbitant rates. These reductions are calculated to result in a loss of revenue of £500,000 per annum on the through traffic, and of £250,000 per annum on the local traffic, or altogether a loss of £750,000. And, after that loss, Lord Milner is now confidently able to calculate on a net revenue of 2½ millions. This relief to the consumer in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony of three-quarters of a million does not nearly show the whole advantage that he is going to obtain, because it is accompanied by a reduction in the railway rates of the maritime colonies—Natal, the Cape—and Portugal, and this reduction is estimated at another £300,000, so that the consumer will be benefited to the extent of over £1,000,000 a year, chiefly in regard to the necessaries of life, when these rates come into force, which will be almost immediately. As an illustration, I may say that a reduction of forty per cent. has been made in wheat and flour and in articles of that kind; and all the necessaries of life which have been so exorbitantly charged will now be very much decreased in rates. The charge of £1,400,000 for the loan leaves a surplus of £1,100,000 to the common fund, without any question of resorting to any additional security which might be given by the Transvaal Government. But that does not represent the position of what I have called the common fund because it is the intention of Lord Milner to put upon it as second charges other expenditure; in the first place, the expenditure of the South African Constabulary, which is £1,500,000, and then some other joint expenditure amounting, roughly, to £200,000. The total expenditure of the common fund for 1903-4 is, therefore, estimated at £3,100,000. The total income is £2,500,000, and the deficit on the common fund is, therefore, £600,000, which has to be provided out of the separate resources of the two colonies.

That brings me to the separate finances of the two colonies. How do they stand with this ultimate liability hanging over their heads — this liability of £600,000 over and above their ordinary administrative expenses to be used for the purpose of filling up the deficit in the common fund? I must warn the House that the estimates of the Transvaal are perpetually changing. Every month we get a new estimate, but it is always a better one than the last. Never yet have we had to fear anything in the nature of reaction. I, of course, can only give the latest returns; but my own hope and expectation is that, favourable as they are even they will be improved upon. But, according to the latest estimate, the revenue of the Transvaal for 1903-4, apart from railway receipts, will be £4,500,000. The normal expenditure, apart from the constabulary, will be £3,000,000, leaving a surplus of £1,500,000. The Orange River Colony's revenue will be £500,000, and the expenditure £500,000, leaving no balance but constituting an equilibrium. This estimate is made only after deducting the loss of revenue which will follow upon the intended changes in the Customs duties. There, again, the old Customs duties were inordinate in amount, and, above all, they were grotesquely bad finance in the way in which they were levied. They were levied on the necessaries of life. [OPPOSITION Cheers.] Yes, but without the direct taxation which in some more favoured countries accompanies the more indirect contributions. But in the case of the Customs duties of the Transvaal, which are, of course, the main element of its revenue, they did undoubtedly press with enormous severity upon the working classes. I had a calculation submitted to me of what it cost in Johannesburg for a decent working man and his wife, with the ordinary family of three children, to live. With house rent and the mere necessaries of life, I was told he could not live decently under £24 a month; and that when he gets £30 a month—as a skilled artisan does—the balance which comes to him for luxuries and other expenses is only £6 out of the £30. That state of things has been brought about by a number of circumstances which cannot be altered all at once; but it is largely due to the extravagant duties and railway rates upon the necessaries of life. The change which has been made involves a loss to the Transvaal of only £130,000 per annum—that is to say, the balance of loss due to the revision of taxation enables a reduction on the necessaries of life much greater than that. The reduction is in part made up by heavier charges on spirits, and articles of that kind. But the benefit to the people is much greater than the apparent benefit shown by the loss to the Transvaal revenue, because the maritime colonies, under a little gentle pressure, and no doubt animated by the most friendly intentions, have agreed to reduce to a minimum the old transit charges for goods paying at the ports and intended for the Transvaal; and it is anticipated that the saving under that scheme will be at least £300,000, so that the total benefit to the consumer can be reckoned to be between £300,000 and £400,000; while to the most necessitous consumer it will be a good deal more than that. The Transvaal, after making this concession, will have a surplus of £1,500,000. Deducting the deficit on the common fund, there will be a surplus still of £900,000. Next year—that is, in 1903–4—the charge will come upon the Transvaal for its first instalment of the contribution—which is not guaranteed by us, but is a charge on the assets and revenues of the Transvaal—and that will be £400,000. Deducting that from the surplus of £900,000, there will be a surplus for 1903–4 of £500,000. Next year, assuming that the revenues of the Transvaal do not increase at all, there will be an additional charge of £400,000 for the second instalment of the loan, and the surplus will be reduced to £100,000; and in the third year the whole loan will be issued, and the total charge for it of £1,200,000 will come to bear. Then there will be a deficit of £300,000, if there is no increase in the revenues of the Transvaal. But Lord Milner says—and I think every one will agree with him—that, in the course of those three years, he thinks that it is a most moderate estimate to assume an increase in the general revenue of £600,000. The final conclusion of the argument, therefore, is that, when the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies have paid for the £35,000,000 loan, and for the £30,000,000 of their contribution, and have made these enormous reductions on the charges on their population, they will still have for further development a surplus of at least £300,000. I say that that is an astounding result. It is now less than twelve months since the conclusion of the war; and, during that time, everything in the way of restoration has had to progress slowly, industries have had to be restarted, and are not yet in full growth. With regard to all this development, we are assuming it to be a charge which will bring with it no profit, although in many ways we believe that the loan will be very profitable, and that, whereas 4 per cent. may be paid as sinking fund and interest, the net revenue will not be less than 6 per cent. Yet in spite of all these conditions I can show such a Budget as I have had the honour of expounding.

There have been in past times and in recent times most bitter criticism of Lord Milner and his policy, because, after all, he only did his duty to those he was sent to protect, and his duty to the Government that instructed him, and to the country, whose almost universal approval hailed his appointment. But that is past; and whatever differences of opinion there may have been, and may be now, as to particular items of his policy, there is not a man who would be so ungenerous as not to congratulate him on this marvellous result of his energy, his ability, and his unexampled devotion to duty. I cannot but recall, though I am not inclined to dwell upon it, the predictions which have been made by those who have been opposed to our policy in regard to its financial results. While I was in South Africa, during the most delicate and difficult task of the negotiations, a message was telegraphed over that the great organ of the Liberal Party said that I was not going to get a penny, and that I should come away empty-handed, as I deserved to do. How that was calculated to help an ambassador the Committee will understand, but at all events it represented, no doubt, an honest opinion. It represented an opinion, which I have heard expressed in this House again and again, that after such a war, and in such a country, nothing was to be expected except desolation, misery, and ruin, and that the charges of peace would be even greater than the charges of war, and that we were placing on the shoulders of the British taxpayers new and terrible responsibilities. I do not go back to that except to hope that, as these were mistaken estimates of the capabilities of a country which has become our country, it may at all events encourage us,—pessimists like my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, optimists like my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and myself—it may encourage us all to take a favourable view of the future. If I am asked what is the reason for this, which I have described as an extraordinary result, I am indeed at a loss to give anything in the nature of a full explanation. I can only fall back on what was said to me by a Boer leader, by a man who fought against us gallantly to the very end, who since then has helped us in the work of repatriation, and at the present moment sits as a fitting representative of the bravest of the Boers on the new Legislative Council which has been created for the Transvaal. I can only say, in his words, when I asked him how it was that the value of land had gone up so much since the war, "I suppose it is because we have a stable and progressive Government." We have got a stable Government. We have in Lord Milner and his assistants, Sir Arthur Lawley and Sir John Goold-Adams—men who are imbued by his spirit—we have got a progressive Government. We have got an honest Government. We know now, at all events, that every penny collected from the taxpayer will go back for the benefit of the taxpayers, and will not go into the pockets of individuals or of corporations. In that way this great result has been achieved; and I certainly can truly say that my most sanguine expectations—and I have always been sanguine—have been more than realised.

There is only one other word I would like to say before I sit down. I admit it is rather collateral to the main subject. There has recently been held at Bloemfontein a conference of all the colonies. I believe that in its completeness, in its thoroughly representative character, it is really the first of the kind in South Africa; and the result—the extraordinary unanimity of the decisions and the satisfactory character of the conference as a whole—justifies us in forming very satisfactory conclusions as to what may happen in the future when the union becomes still closer. At this conference the arrangements which I have referred to as to Customs and other matters were carried through, and I believe all the resolutions, at all events the main ones, were unanimous. Each colony was represented In the case of the Transvaal there were one or more representatives of the Boers. In the case of the Cape there were one or more representatives of the Dutch, so that it was not exclusively a British conference. Among their recommendations was one which I think is worth the attention of the House of Commons. It is the recommendation—I do not think it can be called a decision—to the various Legislative Assemblies of South Africa to give to Great Britain a preferential Customs rate of 25 per cent. I am not prepared now to predict what the ultimate end of that recommendation may be, but at least I think it must be taken by everybody as an evidence of true loyalty, as a recognition of obligation which we most gratefully acknowledge. I was told, I have been told, that when this matter comes up for discussion in the Cape Parliament the Dutch will object. I very much doubt that. I do not know why they should object, and at all events it will be contrary to the anticipations which I formed when I had the opportunity of conferring with the leaders of the Dutch party. They assured me, in the fullest possible terms, and I gladly and sincerely accepted their assurance, of the loyalty of the majority of our Dutch fellow-subjects in the Cape Colony to the British connexion and the British Crown. I ventured to tell them that I thought that hitherto the Dutch had been too provincial, that they had not sufficiently appreciated the fact that they were not only citizens of a colony but also citizens of the Empire. I confess I was very glad to find that in this view, among the leaders at any rate, there was no want of sympathy. On the contrary, they seemed to share my hope, I will not dare to call it a conviction, that, while it is absolutely impossible and would be undesirable to assimilate Dutch and British so that each should lose their individuality, still you may find for both of them, as for all the races under the British flag, the true link of union in their common devotion to Imperial interests. If this is carried out, and I am not without hope that it will be carried out, the fact that the Dutch find themselves able to support such a resolution as that which has been made by their representatives at the conference, is evidence for them as well as for us that they do desire to draw closer the ties which connect them with the other parts of the Empire. I referred to this as only collateral. It may be considered irrelevant. It is interesting at any rate, and I say it is one of those things which you have to take into account in considering such a loan as this. We are, for the first time, asked to guarantee a larger sum for our colonies than we have ever been asked before. This is no doubt a precedent, and deserves, therefore, careful attention and consideration, although in this case I believe there is not the shadow of a shade of risk connected with it. Still, the House of Commons is quite right if it takes into its account all the possibilities, and above all, if it considers the spirit of those whom it is endeavouring to assist. We have in other cases made loans and guaranteed loans to foreign countries without much assurance of any reciprocal feeling or obligation on their behalf; but now we are asked to do it for our own fellow-subjects, for our own children, for those who have given evidence of their affectionate regard, of their acceptance of the obligations as well as of the privileges of our common position. It is on that ground that I submit this loan and that I recommend it to the Committee as not only a safe, prudent, and wise measure of statesmanship, but also as the fulfilment of an Imperial duty.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal Colony not exceeding in the aggregate an amount sufficient to raise £35,000,000, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments, and to provide for the application of any sums paid by the Transvaal or Orange River Colony in respect of expenses incurred in or incidental to the prosecution of the late war in South Africa."—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman need not have been under any misapprehension as to any possible impatience on the part of the Committee at the length of his speech. Not only has the Committee listened with the intensest interest and with great sympathy to what he has said, but the information the right hon. Gentleman has given us is exactly what the Committee desired to know. We are now, it seems to me, almost exactly in the position we find ourselves in after the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the year has unfolded his Budget to us. We have received the information of his Estimate of all the matters concerned in that Budget, and I think we shall do well to follow the usual course which is taken upon that occasion, that is to say, that we should simply acknowledge the lucidity of the statement made by the Minister, and state that the subject is of such importance that we must have time to consider the facts and figures that he has laid before us, before we pronounce any opinion upon it. The right hon. Gentleman has, no doubt, taken an optimistic view of the situation in South Africa; but, optimistic or pessimistic, we are dealing with an extremely serious matter in this Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman has said enough to show that when we are called upon for this loan, it must not be regarded as a final discharge of all the liabilities that may fall upon us in the future, but that it may be the first of a series of other grants for assistance which may have to be given to these new colonies. On that very ground alone I think we ought to have time to consider all that he has stated. The right hon. Gentleman is well aware, probably more aware than anybody else, of the extraordinary variety of opinions we receive from South Africa. He has been there and has heard all the different views himself, but we in this country, groping about almost in the dark, hear the most contradictory accounts of the same thing day after day. The right hon. Gentleman speaks very hopefully of the agricultural value of the Transvaal and of the possibility, by the expenditure of large sums of money, of bringing large tracts of land into profitable occupation. I had an accidental opportunity two or three days ago of listening to a man of the highest importance in that country, a man entirely favourable to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, who assured me that there could not be a greater delusion than to imagine that there was any agricultural value whatever in the Transvaal. I do not set my authority against the other, but these absolutely contradictory statements which we receive bewilder us, and make it difficult for us to estimate what our obligations may be in that part of the world.

There was one matter on which the right hon. Gentleman dwelt which I think is of some consequence, and it is the only individual point which I shall refer to, namely, the proposal now made for a joint council for the two colonies. I know that the right hon. Gentleman must be as fully aware as any of us of the great danger of anything that looks like forcing federation on the colonies in South Africa. We have had great experience already of the attempt to anticipate public feeling in that matter, and, as I have said, I have no doubt that the greatest care will be taken to guard against the impression being conveyed that this is, as it were, the thin end of the wedge put in, in order, before the colonies have considered it, and before some of them are clothed with that representative responsibility which they ultimately will have, to prejudice or prematurely foster some scheme of federation which, when it comes, as I hope it will come, spontaneously from themselves, will have every chance, I trust, of the most perfect success. The right hon. Gentleman said a few words—they were very few, but I regret them—with regard to the different opinions which have been held respecting the war and the doubts which have been thrown on the result of it, and especially upon the future prosperity of the colonies. He has seen somewhere some expression of opinion indicative of doubts as to his own success in obtaining any satisfactory financial agreement or arrangement whatever with the colonies. Well, I do not think that ever came from any authoritative or responsible person, at all events among those, of whom I am one, who have not been slow to criticise the policy of the right hon.

Gentleman. But I will say this of him, that we feel confident that no one could have gone out there more capable than himself, or more likely than himself, to achieve the object for which he went. The account he has given to-day, which is fuller than any we have had of the origin of the transactions which culminate in this Resolution will, I think, convince the country that the interests of this country have been well regarded by him. But when he said that there were some, I suppose, of us who denied that the colonies would be worth anything to us at the end of the war, I think he a little exaggerated any opinion we have ever held, because what was said was that they would be left at the end of the war in a dilapidated and devastated condition, and that is absolutely proved from the mouth of Lord Milner in the early pages of this Blue-book; but we well knew their recuperative power and resources, and that probably the ultimate end would be a prosperous future for these colonies. I only rose to say that I think we ought to reserve the discussion. There may be some questions to be asked of the right hon. Gentleman, but the main discussion of this most important matter ought to be deferred until we have had an opportunity of fully considering the figures put before us—figures which I may say are not reconcileable with those given us in the Blue-book.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: They are taken from the Blue-book.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman in his estimate of the Budget of the Transvaal went far beyond anything that is in this Blue-book. At least I have not found anyone who is able to trace them, but a little opportunity may enable us to discover them lurking somewhere in its pages. I do not think, at all events, that we shall be able to investigate them to-day. Having them before us in the clear way in which the right hon. Gentleman has put them, we shall be better able to judge of the real financial situation of the Transvaal. With these few observations I would only again say that we are indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for so fully explaining to us a matter of the first importance.

*MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale) said that no one more fully acknowledged than he did the Colonial Secretary's work in South Africa, but he could not allow this Resolution to be passed without expressing his bitter disappointment at the smallness of the war contribution. He appreciated the difficulties of the right hon. Gentleman, the conflicting interests he had to conciliate, and the enormous power of the mining magnates. He had watched the methods of the mining magnates from the beginning, and if their energy, now that the war contribution was settled, in developing the industry was anything like as great as their energy in belittling that industry before the contribution was settled, then he could predict that the Transvaal would have unprecedented prosperity. The Colonial Secretary had a far wider and more splendid object in view than the collection of a handful of millions. His object was the pacification of half a continent, and he agreed that any policy tending to retard that object would have been an extravagant and short-sighted economy. He considered that the British taxpayer should participate in the splendid future which the Colonial Secretary had described, and of which he had laid the foundations. After all it was entirely through our credit that the Transvaal was able to borrow this £35,000,000, and, if the country proved worthless, the liability would fall on the British taxpayer. But if they believed, as he believed, that every million invested would increase tenfold, was it not incumbent upon the Government, who lent the country's money, to intercept a proportion of those profits by ear-marking a deferred share towards the repayment of the War Debt? He regretted that the Colonial Secretary had abandoned the idea of the deferred share. He had told them that the sum might be delayed in its return for perhaps fifty years. If that was too long, would the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of hypothecating certain sums for a limited period—say ten or twenty years? He expected great surpluses in the future. Surely if he was able to take in the next ten years £10,000,000 into the national exchequer, that sum was something in these days when everybody was preaching economy.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the Committee would expect to hear something from the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding this loan. The loan, according to belief in the City, was to be raised at 3 per cent., and that stock had already been dealt in at a premium of 1 per cent. If the City had heard already how the loan was to be raised, and if the speculators on the Stock Exchange were trading on that information, he thought the House of Commons ought to be let into the secret before passing the Resolution. The effect of the Resolution would be that the British Government would guarantee the loan, but the Committee were asked to pass the Resolution without any knowledge of the terms on which the loan was to be issued. It was a good long time since the House of Commons had been called upon to guarantee a loan of this character. It was a somewhat peculiar loan and he did not know whether there was a precedent in favour of the course adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that was to say, of asking the House to pass a Resolution guaranteeing a loan without allowing the House to know the terms on which the loan was to be raised. He wished to say a very few words with reference to the character of this transaction. The Colonial Secretary, in recommending this loan to the Committee, said that this loan and the War Indemnity Loan of £30,000,000 were inextricably bound up together. That was perfectly true. Moreover, the right hon. Gentleman said that the inhabitants of the Transvaal, really the people of Johannesburg, had consented to the Indemnity Loan on the condition that this loan would be raised and guaranteed by this country; and there were very good grounds for that, because, from a political and financial point of view, it was better to have a bird in the hand instead of capturing the bird in the bush fifty years hence. But what was the sum total of this financial operation? It was that £35,000,000 were to be added to the National Debt of England—he meant so far as the credit of England, Ireland, and Scotland was pledged for that amount—in addition to the present burden of the National Debt—whilst only a sum of £30,000,000 was obtained as War Indemnity. In other words, the result of the whole operation was an increase of £5,000,000 on the burden of debt. He believed that the Government on the Rand had shown a pretty keen sense of their own interest, and that they would come off best in this transaction. And when one listened to the Colonial Secretary explaining the results of the recent financial changes in the Transvaal, one could see that that was only a part of the consideration. The gentlemen of Johannesburg only gave their consent to underwrite part of the £30,000,000 loan because they were to get such reductions in the railway rates as would more than repay them. He did not say that the reductions in the railway rates were not a good policy. They would contribute towards the prosperity of the colony; but the immediate result of these reductions would be to increase the profits of the mines and far more than compensate the Johannesburg gentlemen for underwriting the loan. Moreover, they were going to underwrite the new Indemnity Loan at such a price as would undoubtedly give them an enormous profit out of the transaction. Let the Committee mark this. We were not only taking upon ourselves a responsibility for the £35,000,000 loan, but were also really pledging the credit of this country for the £30,000,000 Indemnity Loan. Did anyone for a single moment doubt that, morally, the success of that £30,000,000 loan depended on the credit of this country? This loan was being raised not by a constitutional free government, which was really the only form of Government which was capable of pledging the credit of the people; it was being raised on the responsibility of this country; and if the interest on the loan were to go into default, could anyone say that Great Britain would not have to pay up? The whole structure of this financial edifice, which looked so glorious when described by the Colonial Secretary, depended in the ultimate result on the political experiment of the government of the Transvaal. If the Transvaal were governed in the spirit which characterised the speech of the Colonial Secretary, or in the spirit which characterised the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman when travelling through that country, he should say that the loan would be repaid. But if another spirit got the upper hand, if the Progressive party at the Cape got the control of the whole government of South Africa, with a policy inspired by Dr. Jameson and Dr. Smartt, and if they embarked on a new career like that which led to the South African War—in that event, which was by no means impossible, the unfortunate taxpayers of England, Scotland, and Ireland, would ultimately be burdened with the whole of the £30,000,000 as well as with this £35,000,000.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he had listened with the greatest interest and attention to the statement of the right hon. the Colonial Secretary, but, though lucid and clear, it was so complicated that it made it a little difficult to discuss it at once. That statement consisted of two different Budgets as a justification for two different loans; but he could not say that it was wholly satisfactory. He must confess that he had been appalled lately at the readiness with which debt was accumulated in this country. He seemed never to wake in the morning without coming upon the creation of some new debt for some purpose or other. There was the £159,000,000 loan for the war, the £100,000,000 loan for the purchase of Irish land in the interests of Irish tenants and landlords; there was the loan of £35,000,000 for the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, and there was the further loan of £30,000,000 for which, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, this country would be ultimately responsible. He did not know where this readiness to borrow money would end. It might be that we had ample security for all these debts, but it was a most serious thing to go on piling up debt on the shoulders of the British taxpayer. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bethink himself, not only of the present necessities, but of the future results. There was a certain point on which he did not find himself able to follow the Colonial Secretary. In the first place he understood that there were to be two loans; this £35,000,000 loan, which we were to guarantee and for which, in effect, we should be responsible. The interest on that, he supposed, would amount to something a little over £1,000,000. Then there was the other loan of £30,000,000 charged on the revenues of the Transvaal, the interest on which, with sinking fund, would amount to £1,200,000. Now, he held with the hon. Gentleman opposite, that when a Crown colony contracted a loan, charged on the revenues and resources of that colony, in the final result this country was responsible for it. We could not, in honour, escape from that responsibility. He trusted that the question would never come to a practical point here, but undoubtedly in the case of a Crown colony of Great Britain, which was part of the Kingdom of Great Britain—not like a self-governing colony—we could treat for it and undertake responsibility in respect of it. And in the event of repudiation of the debt by the Crown colony it would be wholly impossible for anyone to say that, as regarded honour, this country should refuse to pay that loan. The interest on the £30,000,000 loan would be met out of a common fund, and that common fund, as he understood, though he might be wrong, mainly arose from the profits of the railways, estimated at £2,500,000 a year. Here was the point on which he wanted information. Was it the fact that the railways did not at present belong to the Government of the Transvaal, but were to be purchased for £13,000,000? Or was it that the Government of the Transvaal had certain rights over the railways, and that the remaining rights were to be purchased for £13,000,000? These £13,000,000 were to come out of the £35,000,000. The first question he asked was, if the railways made a profit of £2,500,000 a year and if they were to be bought for £13,000,000? that was only six years purchase. That was a very small sum; it was better than the Irish tenant paid for his land. A great deal depended upon that, because it was upon that sum that the security rested to a very large extent. He wished the right hon. Gentleman would say whether he was right or wrong in this respect. He quite conceived that a large part of the property in the railways might be in the State, and that what was to be purchased was the remaining portion of it. Here was a great difficulty in his mind. First of all, the interest on the £30,000,000 loan was £1,200,000 a year. But how about the interest on the £35,000,000 loan. He did not hear the right hon. Gentleman make any provision for that, although he provided for the interest on the £30,000,000 loan.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: On the credit side of the common fund there is at present only the railway revenue. The debit side is made up of the charge for the £35,000,000 loan which at 4 per cent. for interest and sinking fund amounts to £1,400,000, and is a first charge upon the common fund. If, therefore, I am right in saying that the income from the railways is £2,500,000 there is a surplus of £1,100,000 after paying the full charge on the £35,000,000 loan.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then there would have to be added the interest on the £30,000,000 loan.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is not on the common fund.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that then there would be £1,400,000 for the £35,000,000 loan, and £1,200,000 for the £30,000,000 loan which the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies would have to pay.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Gentleman entirely confuses two things. He must keep in mind that there are two funds, the common fund of the two colonies, and the ordinary Budget of the Transvaal. The £35,000,000 loan comes upon the common fund, and the £1,200,000 required for the £30,000,000 loan comes on the Transvaal Budget. When I dealt with the common fund, I showed a surplus of £1,100,000 after paying for the £35,000,000 loan. When I came to deal with the Transvaal Budget, I showed a surplus of £1,500,000 which was available for the charge of the £30,000,000 loan.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was obliged to his right hon. friend for making the matter clearer. The £35,000,000 loan was secured on the common fund arising out of the railway; but there remained a charge of £1,200,000 for the £30,000,000 loan, which was secured on the revenues of the Transvaal amounting at present to £4,500,000. That was a very large proportion of the revenues of the Transvaal to pledge. He agreed with his right hon. friend that it was probable that the Transvaal revenues would largely increase, but £1,200,000 out of £4,500,000 was a very large proportion to pledge at the inception of the career of the colony. With regard to the advance of £6,000,000 and to the military charges to be met, he confessed he could not thoroughly follow his right hon. friend. It seemed to him that, properly speaking, these were military charges which ought to be paid out of the Estimates of this country. He knew that there was great confusion and uncertainty as to what should or should not be put on the Estimates. When he was on the Public Accounts Committee, the Committee was told by the War Office that they could not tell within a million or two what the very charges alluded to by his right hon. friend would amount to, viz., the charges incurred by officers in the field for the purchase of necessary stores. All this rendered it extremely desirable that some statement should be circulated to hon. Members embodying in an abstract form the interesting figures given by the right hon. Gentleman, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee would recognise that it was almost impossible to criticise the right hon Gentleman's statement in any detail His only criticism would be this—that he felt increasing alarm at the increasing debt which was being piled up on the country. He did not know when it was proposed to take the Bill; but he presumed that a sufficient period would be allowed to elapse in order that the statement which he hoped would be circulated might be considered.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he was not quite sure that he understood the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as to the security for the two loans. The right hon. Gentleman said in reply to the hon. Member for Kings Lynn, that the security for the

£35,000,000 loan would be the intercolonial fund, and that the security for the £30,000,000 loan, would be the surplus of the Transvaal Budget. He understood the right hon. Gentleman in his speech to say that for the £35,000,000 loan there would be the security of the assets of both the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. Now he rather gathered that the security for the £35,000,000 loan was to be limited exclusively to the railway revenue.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I never said that. I said that in the last resort we would have the security of the whole of the assets, and the revenue of the Transvaal; but that, in the first instance, the charge would lie on the common fund; and as I believe that the common fund will always be twice, or thrice, or even more the amount that will be sufficient to pay the charge, I do not think it very likely that we shall ever have to resort to the Transvaal revenue.

MR. BUCHANAN said he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. Then there was another question. As the intercolonial fund did not at present exist, and as he gathered from Lord Milner's statement that an Order in Council would be required to constitute it, he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to consent to the Order being promulgated. They might, therefore, conclude that the security for the £35,000,000 loan stood altogether higher than the security for the £30,000,000 loan, and had first call on the railway receipts, and after that, a call on the assets and revenue of the Transvaal. [MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear.] The right hon. Gentleman stated in the course of his speech that he had received a telegram from Lord Milner in which he stated that the railway revenue amounted to £2,500,000 for the present year.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is the estimate for 1903–04.

MR. BUCHANAN said that Lord Milner had stated that that was a somewhat exceptional increase, and that, as regarded the future, the net estimated revenue should not be taken as more than £2,000,000. Was the Committee to understand that Lord Milner had modified his view, and that the Committee might consider the future estimate to be £2,500,000.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir.

MR. BUCHANAN said that, of course, increased the security for the loan. In the latter part of his statement the right hon. Gentleman gave a glowing account of the possibility of an increased Transvaal revenue in the next few years; but the right hon. Gentleman did not make any statement as to whether there was not likely to be a considerable increase in the annual expenditure of the Transvaal, because it appeared from the Blue-book that that expenditure was rapidly increasing at present. They were introducing into the country new schemes which would undoubtedly cost a great deal of money. There were schemes for agricultural development, educational development, public works and native labour, no estimates of the cost of which had been given; and the Committee should have some information from the right hon. Gentleman as to the probable increase in the expenditure of the Transvaal. If the right hon. Gentleman could give that information he would enlighten the Committee more as to the ultimate security for this large loan. It was a serious matter to impose on a limited community a debt of £65,000,000, which was more than double the debt of Cape Colony.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he would not have intervened in the debate were it not for a remark which fell from his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn. His hon. friend said that this country never would, and indeed never honourably could, repudiate a liability incurred by a Crown colony in respect of a loan. His hon. friend probably had not observed that in every prospectus issued by a Crown colony a passage appeared that the revenues of the colony alone were hypothecated to the security, and that neither the Consolidated Fund nor the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury were responsible, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, it could not be represented that this country would incur any legal, or even any moral, liability, in respect of the £30,000,000 loan. There was the liability of the government of the colony in question — that was the security, and there was a reasonable conviction—he put it higher than a hope—that there could be no conceivable risk incurred by anyone investing in the £30,000,000 loan. Because of that, he was not very pleased at the prospect of the commission to be paid to the gentlemen who had underwritten the loan. He was quite certain that the House of Commons and the country would be glad to know there was no claim for that. Having said that, he thought that those who managed these negotiations did no more than was right. They had secured the basis of the loan, and had made absolutely certain the prospect of the loan being placed and the indemnity to be paid by the colonies being received into the Exchequer. He had noticed one discrepancy in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary. Lord Milner had fixed the sum necessary to compensate the shareholders of the railway at £15,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman put it at £13,000,000. That was a large discrepancy, and he hoped the figures of the right hon. Gentleman were right. But it was scarcely a business-like thing to ask a Committee of this House to guarantee a loan, as to the form of which, and with regard to which, the Committee had no information. He quite appreciated the reasons, perhaps better than anybody else, which rendered it expedient that this information should not be given, and so far as he was concerned he approved of the secret being kept if it was not intended to issue the prospectus immediately, but if the prospectus was to be issued to-morrow he thought the Committee should be given the information and not be asked to give this guarantee in the dark.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs), whose opening remarks were very indistinctly heard, was understood to say, he agreed that this was not the time for any real discussion upon this matter, and he sincerely hoped the sanguine expectations of the Colonial Secretary would be realised. He complained that there was no proper statement with regard to this matter on which the Committee could rely—there were no estimates which did not vary. He hoped the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman would be realised, but at the same time it was only right to remember that the Transvaal now was taxed in indirect taxation alone to the extent of £10 a head of the population, whilst we, who thought we were fairly taxed, were taxed indirectly to the extent of only £2 per head, so that the people of the Transvaal paid five times as much as we in indirect taxation. One point which he desired to draw attention to, not to depreciate the statement that had been made by the Colonial Secretary, but because it offered food for reflection and would enable the Committee to realise what it was doing, was that a loan of £65,000,000 to a population of 400,000 amounted to a loan of £160 a head. In this country we had a loan of £880,000,000 which worked out at £18 a head. It was impossible for business men not to look upon this loan as a very serious proposition. Then there was the revenue. He respectfully reminded the right hon. Gentleman of the suggestion made by the hon. Member for King's Lynn that we ought to have a statement of the revenue in a handy form. From the estimated revenue it appeared that £2,000,000 was estimated as the average profits of the railway, but the Colonial Secretary had stated it at £2,500,000. That was a most important difference, and there should be some official statement in this matter on which the Committee could rely. Part of this loan was to be spent in payments to those who had an interest in the railway. The right hon. Gentleman said £13,000,000, but in the Blue-book Lord Milner's first estimate was £13,000,000 and his later one £14,000,000.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I may say at once that the £13,000,000 is for railways. The sum of £14,000,000 includes £1,000,000 for rolling stock, which I treated as a separate item. That accounts for £1,000,000. There remains the fact that at a much earlier period Lord Milner, who knew nothing about our negotiation and could only make a guess, said—

> "I suppose £15,000,000 will be the outside of what is required."

We think there is justification for the statement that £14,000,000 will be the outside figure, including £1,000,000 for rolling stock; but it is impossible to go into the details, because we are dealing with these railways. We have made offers to the shareholders and debenture holders of certain of these railways, and we cannot disclose the course of the negotiations. We can only say generally what is our expectation.

SIR ROBERT REID said he did not challenge the good faith either of Lord Milner or the right hon. Gentleman. He merely called attention to the fact that they had not these figures, and he merely pointed it out as an illustration of the unbusinesslike way in which this matter was being dealt with. There was another consideration which he only desired to adumbrate. The right hon. Gentleman in the optimistic policy he supported, gave a rosy picture of the future conditions of the Transvaal. That being so he could not see why the Transvaal should require this guarantee at all. But putting that on one side altogether, why should we guarantee money for the purpose of buying the railways already built? Why should the Government buy railways which exist now and which now and in the future would assist in developing the country? There might be good reasons, but unless the Committee were told those reasons it did not seem to him that the £13,000,000 they were asked to guarantee were necessary. They were also asked to pay something to build new railways. Railways in the colonies were generally built by contract. If the Transvaal was so prosperous, and likely to remain so, why should not those railways be built by contract instead of this country being asked to guarantee a loan of £13,000,000 for them. The settlement of the land was a more difficult problem. Already a sum of £1,000,000 had been spent in land settlement since the war ended. The whole of that sum had gone in the purchase of land, and it appeared from the Blue-book that the number of settlers settled in the Orange River Colony was about 360. These settlers had about 1,500 acres apiece, or a total, roughly speaking, of 500,000 acres, which according to his calculation represented a cost of £1,200 per head to the State. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of a large settlement of British people to give a "colour" to the entire population, and Lord Milner, in a previous dispatch, had estimated the cost at £1,000 per head. He pointed out these facts in order that the Committee should appreciate the character of the enterprise in which they were being asked to embark. Whether the policy was right or wrong these were the facts, and Members might well reserve their opinion. Another question was that of irrigation; though it appeared in the present Vote only to a small extent, the Colonial Secretary had suggested that they should look forward to an enormous expenditure on irrigation works, and a long Report in a former Blue-book had recommended an expenditure of £30,000,000 in that direction. When he found that about £23,000,000 out of these £35,000,000 were to be spent either on buying or building railways or in settling lands, it seemed to him there was a danger of this country having thrown on its hands the development of this great tract of territory in South Africa. There were differences of opinion as to the mineral and agricultural wealth of the new colonies, and it was an enormous speculation to embark on an enterprise which would not, or might not, end with this loan, and which already involved an expenditure of £35,000,000 on our credit, and, as he believed, practical or possible responsibility for another £30,000,000. It was a thing which ought to give reasonable men pause. The right hon. Gentleman had the art of persuading where less practised orators would fail. Many serious questions were involved. This was but the beginning of a serious enterprise, and he believed Members were not altogether satisfied with the financial position of the country, though he did not suggest that the national credit was weakened in the sense of there being any doubt of their ability to pay their debts. While he agreed it was not the duty of the Committee to form a hasty judgment on so grave a matter, he did not think Members ought to go away believing everything was as rosy as might be supposed from the Colonial Secretary's statements.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N. E.) said the considerations advanced by the hon. and learned Member were well-deserving of attention, but he could not follow him in the particular view he had put forward. It had recently been pointed out that the price of the Funds compared with the rate of interest was higher than when the interest was 3 per cent.

SIR ROBERT REID said that if the right hon. Gentleman desired to make a comparison which was beyond doubt, there were a small quantity of 3½ per cents. in existence before the recent war; they then stood at 107 or 108, and they were now at about 91.

SIR J. FERGUSSON held that the fact of the price being higher compared with the rate of interest showed that the public credit had not been injuriously affected. The hon. and learned Member had asked what was the object of acquiring these railways. He took it that one reason was the same as that which actuated the Government of India in taking advantage of their powers to acquire the Indian railways at the statutory periods. They were acquiring the railways one by one, to the great advantage of the State, and by pursuing a similar policy in the new colonies they were adopting a course the advantages of which would increase as the colonies were developed. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had referred to the great expansion of public and local debt. But, so long as the debt was incurred for legitimate and profitable objects, the material wealth of the country was not thereby diminished. The public debt of India, in which in the last resort the credit of this country was involved, amounted to £160,000,000 or £170,000,000 but the greater part of it was invested in works of a remunerative character. The railways alone were worth the whole of the debt, and the fact of their being in the hands of the State acted and reacted on the prosperity of the country, because the reduction of the cost of transport gave a larger profit to the labour of the country and generally added to its wealth. There had never been a better investment of public funds, or one more calculated to benefit a country, than the money spent on public works in India. In the same way he believed the large sums we were proposing to invest in public works in the new colonies would constitute the best means of turning to advantage the resources of those territories, and rendering them profitable possessions of the British Crown. To allow those colonies to remain in an unimproved and undeveloped condition would make their acquisition a foolish adventure indeed. He could speak from experience of the great advantage of having a well organised force of police distributed throughout the country. While a governor in Australia a quarter of a century ago, he had many opportunities of observing the beneficial effects of such a force. They were well-paid, respectable men, and generally well educated, and they were of the greatest possible advantage in keeping peace in those colonies. An armed police force was of the greatest possible advantage in restoring peace and in serving the country in many ways. He hoped the police force which had been established in the Orange River and Transvaal Colonies would prove to be as useful as the similar forces in the Australasian Colonies. He thought this was the wisest possible course to adopt, and he felt sure it would conduce to the stability of the country to substitute police for military establishments.

*MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said the Colonial Secretary had described himself as an optimist, and he ventured to agree with him in that opinion. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of what the finances of the new colonies would be three years hence, when the full amount of the interest on the indemnity loan came to be charged upon those colonies, and he said there would be a surplus of £500,000 in the first year, and in the second year £100,000; and then there would be a deficit of £300,000 in the third year. The right hon. Gentleman further stated that that deficit would be more than met by an anticipated increase of the revenue by £600,000 a year, which was to take place in the third year. The Colonial Secretary had spoken of this as an unexampled result of Lord Milner's services. Speaking in the year 1903–4, it was optimistic to declare that three years hence they would have a surplus of this kind; when that surplus was realised it would be time enough to speak of it as an unrivalled success. In the meanwhile they ought to take the cautious view. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when this year he reduced by £500,000 a year the amount being paid in discharge of the interest and Sinking Fund of the National Debt, whether he took into account the fact that he was going to add another liability for £35,000,000 to the Debt?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I did not reduce the Sinking Fund by £500,000, and we did not take this into account.

*MR. M'KENNA said the right hon. Gentleman had reduced the total amount which was set aside for payment of interest and Sinking Fund by £500,000.

* MR. RITCHIE: I do not think we ought to discuss this matter at present.

*MR. M'KENNA said he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement that he had not taken into account this £35,000,000, which might constitute a new and serious liability on our Exchequer. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to take that item into account, and if he had not already done so they ought not to go to a vote on the question of this loan. In the first place they ought not to sanction a loan which they did not know the full terms of; and secondly, they ought not to sanction it until they had an assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that proper provision to meet all possible liability in respect of that transaction had been made by him. Under the circumstances he felt that they ought not to be pressed to sanction this loan now, and if a Motion were made to report progress he should support it.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the gloomy forebodings which had been predicted in regard to South Africa, but he wished to point out that in several Unionist papers it was stated that the cost of the war would be paid for by the Transvaal itself. The sum of £30,000,000 was not much towards a total expenditure of £250,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the financial houses were contributing this money, and that this country was only guaranteeing the loan. Considering the intolerable burden which the war had thrown upon South Africa he thought it was the duty of those financiers to come forward in this matter. The Colonial Secretary had dwelt a good deal upon the enormous potentialities of wealth in the Transvaal, and as far as the mineral wealth of the Transvaal was concerned he quite agreed with him, for it was enormous. But as far as the agricultural potentialities went he was not quite of the same opinion. He did not like to set his own opinion against that of the right hon. Gentleman, but he wished to inform the Committee that ten years ago he went over a great part of the Transvaal, for he made the journey to Kimberley, Johannesburg, Pretoria, and through Natal. He travelled by Cape cart, and thus had a better chance of seeing the agricultural capabilities of the country than if he had travelled on the railway. His own opinion of the agricultural value of the Transvaal was that it had been greatly exaggerated. He had met a great many men from the Transvaal, but he had never yet met one who had been there any considerable time, and who had any real knowledge of the land, who was not extremely sceptical in regard to the future value of agriculture in the Transvaal. Up to now the Transvaal had imported nearly everything, including corn, Swiss milk, and tinned meat, and if their agricultural prosperity had been so great as it had been made out, they would not have had to import these things. There were lots of ways in which they might spend the money in helping the cultivation of the land nearer home than in South Africa. In regard to the contribution to be made by the Transvaal, he wished to ask the Colonial Secretary whether the financial houses who were going to underwrite this £30,000,000 were going to get any underwriting fees.

* **Mr. RITCHIE**: No.

Mr. CAWLEY thought a 4 per cent. Transvaal Loan was a great deal better than the Cape Loan, which was only 3½ per cent. Instead of being thankful to these financial houses he wished to point out that they were making an enormous profit, and yet this was held up as a great virtue on their part. The whole of South Africa depended on the Transvaal, and if that country was not prosperous the whole of South Africa would become of very little value, because nearly everything depended on the mining industry. He had heard something about Italian settlers in South Africa. Anybody who knew the habits of white people there knew that they worked very well for a year or two, but eventually looked to the black people to do the work. In many ways the black people were a curse to the prosperity of South Africa. White men emigrated from this country with every intention of working, but they always delegated their duties to the black people. The Colonial Secretary should take the statement as to the success of that settlement with a pinch of salt and wait a year or two to see whether it was to be a success or not. He was pleased to hear of the satisfactory progress made so far, and he was only sorry that the Transvaal, with its tremendous potentialities, was not going to contribute more to the cost of the war, which the financial houses there had done a good deal to bring about.

*__Mr. RITCHIE__: I think the House ought to have an answer from me on the question alluded to on both sides as to what will be the terms of the loan. It is suggested that we are pursuing an unprecedented course in not informing the House what the terms of the loan are to be. That is an entire mistake. In my recollection no such statement has ever been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when a Resolution of this kind was before the Committee. It is quite evident that it would be, for many reasons, very imprudent for a Minister to make any declaration of this kind on such an occasion. The calculations put before the Committee have been on the basis of a 4 per cent. charge for interest and sinking fund together, but as to what are the terms on which the loan is to be issued, I do not think that we should be called upon to make any statement, because it would completely tie the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As I have said there are many reasons, but that is the main reason. It is not to be expected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should tie his hands until the last moment before the issue of the prospectus. The prospectus will, I hope, be in the hands of the public before long, and until it is in their hands I do not think there should be any disclosure made of the terms. We are acting in strict conformity with precedent.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): When will the prospectus be issued?

*__Mr. RITCHIE__: I hope to-morrow afternoon.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he was sure that the Committee appreciated what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, and would not insist upon any statement as to the terms of the loan which would not be in the public interest. The fact was that a very glowing prospectus had been presented to the House this afternoon, and the only thing they could usefully do at present was to discuss the Resolution in its broad aspect, without entering into details of the statement just made by the Colonial Secretary. It appeared that under Mr. Kruger's Government the Transvaal had a debt of £2,500,000, and very shortly under the British Government the colony would have a debt of no less than £65,000,000. The broad business question for them to consider was whether that increase of the debt was justified by the state of affairs at present, and by the immediate prospect in the Transvaal. This territory was now part of the Empire and its liabilities were our liabilities so long as it remained a Crown colony. He was not against the expenditure of public money when it was really beneficial and reproductive, and therefore the one question which he asked was how much of this £65,000,000 would be represented by assets reproductive? Looking down the list of figures supplied by the Colonial Secretary this afternoon he could only make out a total of £25,000,000 which would be in any way reproductive. That sum included £13,000,000 for railways, £1,000,000 for rolling stock, £5,000,000 for new railways, £2,500,000 for land settlement, and two or three smaller items, one of which was the rather doubtful one of "repatriation." They ought to carefully consider the position of the new colonies in respect to the fact that their liabilities were just as much our own as if their debt were part of our Consols. He was very glad to hear the Colonial Secretary say that he had given up the idea of allowing £10,000,000 of the indemnity loan to be underwritten by financiers in Johannesburg. Many hon. Members greatly disliked the idea of any portion of the liabilities of the Empire being underwritten by a cosmopolitan ring of financiers in any place whatever. He also objected on the grounds of policy, because if those persons had been allowed to underwrite part of the liabilities of the Transvaal they would have claimed a moral right, with some justice, to have a special voice in the direction of the policy of that colony. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Colonial Secretary would see to it that the second loan on the security of the assets of the Transvaal would be floated without a group of financiers particularly interested, having anything to do with its flotation. He urged that when British credit was being used in this way they should see that the money was spent, and everything possible done, to improve the whole bulk of the people in the colony. A great part of the money was to be spent on the purchase of rails for the extension of railways. These rails would have to be shipped, and he hoped that the shipments would not be made in such a way as to support the present monopoly in freights to South Africa. They all hoped that the reduction of duty on imports and the reduction of railway rates would have a great effect in bringing down the cost of living for white people in Johannesburg, and they hoped also that the Colonial Secretary would do everything he possibly could in his Department to bring about free trade with South Africa in the matter of shipping freights, so that traders in this country could have a fair chance in the development for which the Committee was now asked to vote £35,000,000. If the right hon. Gentleman did that he would receive the gratitude of the traders of Great Britain, as well as of the people of the Transvaal. He wished the Colonial Secretary had kept to his first intention with regard to the war contribution. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he went out to Africa with the intention of holding that the State should have some right in the future mineral assets of the Transvaal. By adhering to that he would have adopted a very much sounder policy, although the actual money received might have been deferred for some years, than he had done by the bargain he had made. He was sorry indeed that the right hon. Gentleman had been persuaded to confine himself to a 10 per cent. tax on the gold mines in the Transvaal, for he must know that that 10 per cent. had been more than recouped by the saving on the cost of dynamite alone. After all, what tax was fairer than a tax on profits? He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had been able to announce a great reduction in railway freights, which would make it easier for poor white men to live in Johannesburg, but sorry that he had not claimed a greater share of the mineral wealth of the Transvaal to meet the expenditure on the war.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said that the Colonial Secretary had referred to the excessive taxation of the Transvaal previous to the war. It was said that the Transvaal was then groaning under the taxation of the Boer Government. Now, the taxation under the old Boer Administration amounted to £3,800,000 a year, while the expenditure of the British Administration vastly exceeded that amount. At the last election in this country they were told from every platform of the excessive burden of taxation that was levied on the white population in the Transvaal, but by some extraordinary coincidence there was under British Administration higher taxation than that levied under Mr. Kruger's Government, and that was before any cost whatever for this loan came into account. The

Colonial Secretary stated that under Mr. Kruger's Administration capital expenditure was slack, and further that unless this country found the money for the advancement of the Colony by the proposed public works, the Transvaal would remain in its present condition. He thought the Committee would hardly agree, if they looked at all the facts, that that was a right conclusion. The goldfields were discovered in 1888, and in ten years the prosperity of the Transvaal had advanced by leaps and bounds, and its revenues had increased to about £4,000,000 without the aid of the British taxpayer. He looked upon this question as one of policy. It was an Imperial policy, which commended itself to the majority of the House of Commons, to take the money and credit of this country and spend it in the colonies instead of spending it at home. He submitted that this guarantee which they were now called upon to give necessitated large sums of money being taken out of this country which ought to be spent in this country, and sent to South Africa not in the interest of the people in this country, but in the interest of the people in South Africa. He did not agree to that policy. It was our duty, of course, to try and bring back prosperity to the Transvaal, but he did not think it would be a success, from a commercial point of view, to pledge our credit and spend money right and left to promote an Imperial policy abroad. He was, however, glad to notice that the Colonial Secretary, by his visit to South Africa, had created a better feeling in all parts of the South African colonies, and that a different spirit now permeated the newspapers out there. That was to the everlasting credit of the Colonial Secretary. But although the presence of the right hon. Gentleman in South Africa had had an enormous effect for good, yet that must not be taken as a sign that the past was all forgotten. While giving the Colonial Secretary credit for what he had done since the conclusion of the war, he ventured to believe that had the right hon. Gentleman been in South Africa before the war, that war would never have come about. He was also glad to hear that the Colonial Secretary had become an Army reformer, and that he had swept away the incompetency of the War Office in the frequent changes made on the Settlement Board. But why, in the name of conscience, could not the right hon. Gentleman go farther in the direction of sweeping away incompetency at the War Office?

Mr. Markham.

The right hon. Gentleman did not tell the Committee the conditions under which the £30,000,000 loan were fixed. The Committee, no doubt, were not aware that when the right hon. Gentleman arrived at Johannesburg he had an interview with the leading mineowners or their representatives, and as a result a private agreement was come to, fixing the war indemnity at £30,000,000. Although the mining representatives were not in a position to agree to that off-hand, without a reference to their principals in London, the right hon. Gentleman insisted that the whole matter should be settled before he left Johannesburg. The right hon. Gentleman told the President of the Chamber of Mines that unless the amount of the indemnity was fixed before he left Johannesburg he could not say what Parliament would do in the future. Whereupon, so he was informed, the representatives thought it better to come to an arrangement at once with the right hon. Gentleman. The Colonial Secretary went on to say that it would be dishonourable for the people of Johannesburg to repudiate the payment of the sum named. He did not think it would be dishonourable to repudiate a transaction forced on the representatives in Johannesburg within a fortnight of the right hon. Gentleman's arrival in South Africa, within six months of the conclusion of the war, and before the men representing all shades of public opinion had returned to the Transvaal. No public meeting had been held in Johannesburg or elsewhere in South Africa to ratify that agreement; and his contention was that if the people of Johannesburg could come to an arrangement of that kind, then the time had arrived to grant them representative government. They were told that 85 per cent. of the profits of the railways was to be handed over to the Transvaal Government in payment of the £13,000,000 for railway extension, etc. Did that apply to all the other railways as well?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, to the other railways as well.

MR. MARKHAM said that the net profit from the railways under the Boer Government was only between £300,000 and £400,000; but now they were told it was to be £2,500,000. He was sure that the present profits of the Transvaal railways were enormous, but that was caused by the large amount of material that was at present being sent out to South Africa to make up for the losses caused by the war; and when that special traffic was ended the revenue from the railways would be very much decreased. If so, then the guarantee for the loan would be gone. So far as he was concerned, he hoped that the prosperity of the Transvaal, foreshadowed by the Colonial Secretary, would be realised. He had no doubt it would be realised; but it could only be realised if they met the labour difficulty in South Africa in a reasonable and proper manner. The future of South Africa depended largely on cheap labour; and he maintained that ample facilities should be given to the mining industry to obtain labour. In his opinion, that was the only way in which the future prosperity of South Africa could be assured.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said there were two questions which he wished to put to the right hon. Gentleman. He understood from the right hon. Gentleman that the large sum of £35,000,000 which they were asked to guarantee was only an instalment. Lord Milner in his dispatch stated that the first principle of the situation was that a liberal expenditure on the development of the new colonies was a condition precedent to that great expansion of revenue to which they must look, as well as to provide for their own needs as to share the burden of the British war debt. The right hon. Gentleman did not allude to that very important statement. From that point of view the loan was a security for a war contribution. The right hon. Gentleman himself in his speech at Johannesburg stated the loan would be merely an instalment, and said that he was only asking for what could be spent in two or three years. Therefore, in sanctioning the loan the House of Commons was committing itself to a course of expenditure, without having any information as to its ultimate limit. Could the right hon. Gentleman state now, or at the Second Reading, how much more money would be required for the development of the Transvaal under the scheme propounded by Lord Milner. He would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would state what was the ultimate limit that was likely to be reached in the course of expenditure on which they were asked to embark. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech said very little about the land settlement. There might be information about it in the Blue-book, but he had been unable to discover it. He had, however, seen some extraordinary statements in the South African newspapers about that scheme. He read in the *Cape Times* an interview with a certain Captain Owen Thomas, who said that the people employed to make the purchases were incompetent and did not know the value of land, and, to quote his own phrase, "they were going about buying land with a brass band." In one instance, they paid £5,000 for a farm which was sold a few years ago for £200. The person to whom that farm was let was charged a rental of £250 for land which he could obtain from a private owner for £15 or £20. He hoped some account of those transactions would be given before the Second Reading. He gathered from the Cape papers that Captain Owen Thomas had been employed in some official capacity in connection with this question, and had reported to the Transvaal Government.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Captain Thomas has not been employed in any official capacity. He is, I am informed, the agent for a large land company and his report was a private report, made to his employers.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was obliged for the information; he understood that the report was made to Lord Milner. Anyway he thought they were entitled to know something about the land settlement as far as it had gone, in view of the serious statements which had been published. With reference to the cost of the military occupation of South Africa which still continued to fall entirely on the shoulders of the Imperial taxpayer, nothing had been said to-day to lead them to believe that any part of it was to be shifted on to the shoulders of the Transvaal. Before the House committed itself, considerably fuller information on the matters he had mentioned ought to be given.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian) said he wished to ask if the Government had acquired the property of the Netherlands Railway at Delagoa Bay. It was an extremely valuable property, and was likely to become even more valuable. He was informed that the Portuguese Government were trying to put obstacles in the way of the British Government acquiring the property, and, perhaps, the Colonial Secretary would inform the Committee if any arrangement had been arrived at.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: We are in negotiation with the Portuguese Government on that subject, and I have no further statement to make at present. The hon. Member for Dundee asks whether this loan is only an instalment? Certainly, that is the case. He also asks what is to be the extent of the expenditure in the Transvaal? I should be very sorry to put any limit to it. I hope it may rise to hundreds of millions; but that is a matter which does not concern this House. All that concerns this House is the particular instalment of £35,000,000. The cost of the development of the Transvaal may be many times that amount.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Is anything more to be asked for in this way?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, at present there is nothing in the mind of the Government beyond what we are now asking for. Any future expenditure which may be incurred is a matter entirely for the future; and one on which I have no statement to make. The hon. Gentleman also asked for information with reference to the land settlement. We have given the House everything we possess in regard to that, and we have nothing further to offer. When, however, the hon. Gentleman repeats statements as to the incompetency o the persons appointed in connection with the land settlement, and the extreme prices they have paid, I can only say that I shall be perfectly willing to inquire into any specific case brought to my notice. I have done that several times, and I have invariably found that the accusation made in each case was entirely without foundation.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he only quoted from the *Cape Times.*

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Does the hon. Gentleman consider the *Cape Times* an authority on the land question? I think the *Cape Times* knows very little about the land question in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies. I would only like to say that in South Africa especially, and not only perhaps in South Africa, the gossip which goes on with regard to everything that takes place should be received with a great deal of suspicion. When the hon. Gentleman quotes from a newspaper that the Government of Lord Milner has done something which would not be approved by any reasonable person I think on the whole we are justified in not believing such a statement.

SIR ROBERT REID asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give the statement of the figures asked for by the hon. Member for King's Lynn.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I need scarcely say that I have not the slightest objection; but, as far as I can judge, it will be a statement which can be easily contained on half a sheet of notepaper. I think the figures will be found to have been very plainly put in my speech when hon. Members have the report, but if it is for the convenience of the House I will submit them in the form suggested.

Resolved "That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to guarantee on the security of the Consolidated Fund the interest of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal Colony not exceeding in the aggregate an amount sufficient to raise thirty-five million pounds, and the principal of any such loan by means of the guarantee of Sinking Fund payments, and to provide for the application of any sums paid by the Transvaal or Orange River Colony in respect of expenses incurred in or incidental to the prosecution of the late war in South Africa."—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and four."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) expressed the opinion that it was an extraordinary circumstance that the Resolution read from the Chair should not have been printed for the information of the Committee. He agreed that it would be both improper and imprudent to print these Resolutions for the information of the Committee before the night when the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his Budget statement, because it was possible that, although they might be kept back till the right hon. Gentleman made his speech, his intentions might become known; but when these Resolution were brought forward at a later date he submitted they ought to be printed for the information of Members, in order that they might know what they were going to discuss. He applied to the Government to allow that course to be adopted in the future.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he took exception to these Resolutions being taken to-day on other grounds altogether. The Prime Minister had on three occasions distinctly stated that the Budget Resolutions would be taken next week. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet had asked a question on the subject this afternoon, and was then informed that these Resolutions were to be taken to-morrow, and relying on that assurance had left the House. It was a very serious departure from the procedure of the House to alter the order of business after the Leader of the House had laid down what the order was to be, and if the right hon. Gentleman persisted in proceeding he should move to report progress.

*__Mr. RITCHIE__ said, with regard to the observations of the hon. Member opposite he might say the Government were acting in accordance with precedent. He had been informed that on no occasion had such a course been pursued as was suggested by the hon. Member. With regard to the statements of the right hon. Member for Sleaford, what he understood the Prime Minister to say was that these Resolutions might be put down on Tuesday, but the right hon. Gentleman did not shut out from his mind the fact that they would be put down in their ordinary place behind the Resolution of the right hon. Colonial Secretary. Of the Resolutions now proposed the two first were not likely to lead to any debate whatever. Then came the Income Tax, upon which some discussion might take place. Whatever decision the Committee might arrive at his right hon. friend the Prime Minister was not open to the reflections which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said there were a good many Members on both sides who desired to say something on the Resolution as to the Income Tax, before it was taken, who had now left the House. The impression left on his mind, and he believed on the whole House, by the statements of the Prime Minister was that these Resolutions would be taken to-morrow if the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill was finished before the end of the afternoon sitting, and that if not taken then they would be taken on Tuesday next. There was certainly no suggestion that they should be taken to-day. The Member for Sleaford he was sure did not desire to cast any reflections on the Leader of the House, but it was very desirable if there was any misunderstanding on a matter of this kind, that it should be brought to an end by the Government giving way. He hoped, therefore, the Government would not press these Resolutions now

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he had no special authority to speak for the right hon. Member for Thanet, but he felt bound to say that he had understood the Prime Minister to say that the Budget Resolutions would not be taken until to-morrow, and upon that understanding he had left the House.

*MR. RITCHIE said that was conclusive. If the right hon. Member for Thanet had left the House upon the understanding that these Resolutions would not be taken until to-morrow he would be sorry to take any further steps. If the Committee thought that none of the Resolutions should be taken he would withdraw them.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

[LORDS].

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JOHN GORST said he did not want to interpose in the Second Reading of this Bill but merely to enter a *caveat*. There was a very important question to be raised in Committee stage of this Bill as regarded its operation, particularly with regard to the great insurance companies. The agents of the insurance companies in many instances derived their remuneration not only from a commission on the original premium paid by the assurers, but also on the subsequent premiums. If the Bill as it now stood were applied to this particular business it would greatly interfere with the excellent and valuable operations of all the great insurance companies and would render it necessary for them to communicate to all their insurers the fact that these commissions were being paid. Several suggestions had been made by the companies to meet the difficulty, which obviously ought to be met. He believed that the last proposal was that there should be a regular tariff of the amount of the commissions paid by the insurance companies to agents, and that the companies who paid their agents according to that tariff should be exempted from the operation of the Bill. He did not know whether the Government were prepared now to make a statement on the point, but he mentioned it because it was an important public question, which would have to be dealt with in order that a great and valuable business should not be interfered with.

*MR. RITCHIE thought his right hon. friend would hardly expect him to make an absolute declaration of the opinion of the Government, but he could assure him that the matter to which he referred was quite familiar to the Government, and that it would receive the most careful consideration.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said that while he was very anxious that this measure should pass, alterations had been made in another place which would render it necessary that its provisions should be most carefully looked into, otherwise the Bill would do more harm than good. He had received communications from many gentlemen with whom he did not agree, but the points to which they referred well deserved consideration. Certain clauses, as they stood, opened up a prospect of unlimited blackmailing. The House would not be satisfied until considerable modifications had been made in the way in which even some of the great insurance companies did their business. There were many objectionable features, but there were also features which were quite legitimate. Nobody desired to see the latter struck out or the business hampered. They did desire, however, that the principle of the Bill should become law, and until it did public opinion would not be satisfied that our commercial morality was as it should be. He would be quite satisfied if the Government would undertake that sufficient time should elapse between the Second Reading and the Committee stage to enable these matters to be thoroughly gone into.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) agreed that the Bill was an extremely important one, and one which certainly ought to be passed, but, with the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, he believed in its present form it would do more harm than good. It was too stringent in certain directions, and its details required careful consideration. He understood, however, that the Government admitted that such examination was necessary.

*MR. E. B. FABER (Hampshire, Andover) said he desired to say a few words from the bankers' point of view. As regarded the Bill itself no one wished to shield the guilty. Everyone had suffered from the baneful effects of commissions, and they would be glad to see the Bill as a whole passed into law. At the same time he felt confident that nobody wished to interfere with a legitimate trade, and he ventured to think that if the Bill was passed in its present form the banking interest must at any rate suffer. Bankers every day were instructed by their customers to buy certain stock for them. The banker purchased the stock, and sent the broker's note to the customer, setting forth the commission of half-a-crown, which was divided between the banker and the broker. The bankers held that under such circumstances, there being no secrecy at all, that notice to the principal should be enough to take action of that sort out of the purview of the Bill; and they would ask the Committee carefully to consider the insertion of words that were originally in the Bill, in line 1, section 1, viz., "If any agent corruptly and without the knowledge of the principal," etc. If those words were inserted he should be thoroughly well satisfied.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said it was perfectly reasonable that the fullest opportunity should be given for the consideration of Amendments, but he hoped the Government would not postpone the Committee stage, so as in any way to endanger the passage of the Bill this session.

SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) said the Bill affected a great many interests, and required careful consideration. Unless materially altered it would place the insurance companies in a most awkward position. He strongly desired to see the Bill become law, but as there was not time on the present occasion adequately to discuss its provisions, he moved the adjournment of the Debate.

The Motion failed to find a seconder, and therefore dropped.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said that, according to Clause 1, any person serving under the Crown was an agent within the meaning of the Act. He desired to know whether the description applied to municipal officials. If it did not, he thought they ought to be included.

*MR. RITCHIE said he could not be expected to give off-hand an exact definition of what that particular clause would include. The matter could be considered in Committee, and, if necessary, amended.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) pointed out that nobody had the least notion that this important Bill was coming on, and the Government were incurring an enormous responsibility by rushing the measure forward so unexpectedly. Many clauses required careful consideration on the part of the commercial classes, and certain expressions would need a great deal of definition. He thought this Bill was one which should not be sprung upon the House suddenly in this way.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he was far from saying that the word "absolute" carried out the intention of the clause. Although they wished to take care that these abuses were remedied, they did not want to do it in a way which would interfere with legitimate and honourable commerce.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said it was impossible to resist some feeling of sympathy with the hon. Member who had expressed surprise that a Bill of this radical character should be introduced without notice. Many hon. Members interested were not present because they did not expect the Bill to be taken at this hour. This Bill was a proposal for entirely altering certain accepted principles, not in the definition of the law, but in the rules of evidence by which legal liability was to be established. There was an extraordinary provision in the Bill which provided that, in proving a corrupt motive on the part of the person accused, he should be deprived of giving the most obvious and conclusive evidence to establish his own innocence. That was a provision which ought to be considered by the whole House. A provision of that kind involving such inconsistency ought not to be considered as a mere matter of detail. There was another provision which cast upon the accused person the burden of proving his own innocence. If the prosecutor said he was not aware that a commission had been taken, it would be necessary for the accused person to prove that he had not taken it. Take any solicitor who had received the usual commission, and a solicitor or agent said he was not aware of it. In the first place the accused person could not prove that it was the ordinary custom of the profession to take those commissions; and in the second place, the burden of proving his innocence was cast upon him. These alterations were very serious, and the House might very fairly complain of not being allowed a fuller opportunity of discussing them.

Bill read a second time.

*MR. RITCHIE: I move that the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law.

MR. WHITLEY asked what was the state of the business before the Grand Committees. They were anxious to see this Bill passed, and as they had just sent a contentious Bill up to one of the Grand Committees, he thought it might interfere with the success of this measure. It was very undesirable that this Bill should be put behind an extremely controversial Bill.

*MR. RITCHIE: I understand that the Grand Committee on Trade has two Bills of great importance before it which are likely to take up some time. The Grand Committee on Law has also an important Bill before it, but only one—namely, the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. I think that it is likely to take up some little time. I do not regret that, because in accordance with the views expressed by many hon. Members it is desirable that there should be some little interval in regard to it. I think this Bill would have a better chance before the Grand Committee on Law than before the Grand Committee on Trade.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

SUPPLY.

21ST APRIL, AFTERNOON SITTING.

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £40,600, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £51,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £27,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £36,120, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Miscellaneous Legal Buildings."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £30,150, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £37,500, be granted to His Majesty, to

complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries abroad."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £339,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, and certain Post Offices abroad, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services,"

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £222,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain not provided for on other Votes."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £119,019, be granted to his Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the survey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith."

10. "That a sum, not exceeding £14,204, be granted to his Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for maintaining certain harbours under the Board of Trade, and for Grants in Aid of Harbours."

11. "That a sum, not exceeding £17,980, be granted to his Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead.

CLASS II.

12. "That a sum, not exceeding £48,288, be granted to his Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and for Kew Botanic and Pleasure Gardens, including certain Grants in Aid."

Resolutions read a second time :—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he had previously drawn attention to the fact that there was an improper charge in this Vote, and he appealed to the Treasury to make some explanation in regard to it. There was a charge of £20,100 set down for Osborne House, and that was not a royal palace. A portion of it had been left as a royal exhibition or show, but almost the whole of the royal palace had now been set apart for entirely different purposes. Part of it had become a naval college, and the charge for that ought to be on the Navy Vote. Another part had been turned into an Army convalescent home, and therefore ought to come upon the Army Vote. This £20,100 was improperly put upon this Vote, and the responsibility for it lay, not with the Departments which administered the Vote, but entirely and solely with the Treasury, and the person he had to appeal to was either the Secretary to the Treasury, or, failing him, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They had been told that this was only a small portion of the amount to be charged upon this Vote in future years, and before they agreed to the Report with regard to this Vote he thought they were entitled to have an explanation from the Treasury to justify the placing of this item upon this particular Vote.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT, Durham) said he thought the right course to follow in future would be that so far as the Naval College was concerned, those expenses should appear on the Navy Estimates. As to the hospital expenses, those were chargeable to, and accountable for by the Office of Works, and it was right and proper that they should appear in the Vote for the Office of Works.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) thought the hon. Member for King's Lynn's complaint was a just one, for it was obvious that an error had been committed. The Secretary to the

Treasury admitted the error so far as the naval part was concerned, and he understood that he had promised that this naval expenditure should appear in the Navy Votes. He did not see why the hospital expenditure should be placed in the Vote for Royal Palaces, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would extend his promise to this item and place it under its proper head. He thought the hon. Member deserved the thanks of the House for calling attention to this matter.

*MR. RITCHIE said that if the charge had been placed on the wrong Vote it was owing to the fact that the change in regard to Osborne House had just taken place. He would take care that the matter was considered, and perhaps the Estimate would be arranged more in accordance with the views which the hon. Member had expressed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES suggested that the matter should be referred to the Public Accounts Committee for consideration.

*MR. RITCHIE said that might not be necessary.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) called attention to the condition of the drains at Holyrood Palace and stated that the House had not been informed who was to blame in this matter. The blame had been thrown on the First Commissioner of Works, but there was a gentleman in Edinburgh—he thought his name was Mr. Robertson—who was paid to look after the Royal Palaces in Scotland. What had that gentleman been about in recent years? This was not the first time he had had occasion to call attention to that gentleman's neglect of his duties. He should have discovered that the drains were defective. He hoped the hon. Member representing the Office of Works would be able to assure him that that gentleman would be dealt with.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) said he was afraid he could give the hon. Member very little more information than he gave a fortnight ago. The Works Office had looked into the question of the drainage at Holyrood, and as the condition of things was not satisfactory £3,500 had been put on the Estimates for the purpose of having the drains attended to.

First Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."—Debate arising.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he wished to call attention to a question which was of more importance than on the surface might appear, namely, Hyde Park and the Ride therein. The Ride in Hyde Park was one of the peculiar glories of London, and the one thing which distinguished London from every other capital in Europe, and, indeed, in the world. It was the resort of all those who wished to maintain their health, and all those who wished to come to that House fit for their duties; and it was the resort of all classes of society, rich and poor. The Ride had for years been shockingly neglected. It was now like a morass, and was full of rocks and precipices, streams of water, over which the most careful horse might break his legs, or the rider's head. It was not creditable to the country, and the Row should be re-made altogether, and maintained in a proper condition for riding. He wished to know whether it would be possible to restore the Row to the condition in which it was previous to 1851. He believed it then extended, not merely to the end of Hyde Park, but across the road over the Serpentine into Kensington Gardens. It would greatly add to the amenities of the Row if it was extended along the unfrequented avenue leading to Kensington Palace, and round the east side of the Palace to the Ride at the north end of the park. That would give a proper and dignified Ride for the Metropolis. Meanwhile, it was perfectly disgraceful to leave the Row in its present condition.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) endorsed what had fallen from his hon. friend. He had made inquiry as to the cause of what he considered the disgraceful state of the Row, and he was informed that it was owing to proper attention not being paid to it. Only the dirt taken off the road was placed on it during the greater part of the year, and he suggested that a little more sand should be put there.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said that some years ago he several times drew attention to the question of chairs in the parks, and was informed that the letting of them was not a source of profit to the contractor. Although he received that solemn assurance, he found, two or three years afterwards, that the nation received £2,100 for the permission given by the Office of Works to let chairs. Last year he was informed that a new contract was to be made, and that there was a chance of getting even better terms from the contractor. He asked whether a new contract with improved terms had yet been entered upon. This was a matter of considerable importance to thousands of people, who were compelled to pay for seats in the parks, and he thought they were entitled to more information than they had received up to the present time. The late First Commissioner of Works admitted that he had received numerous complaints as to the price and bad quality of refreshments sold at the kiosks in the parks.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, further consideration of second and subsequent Resolutions stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

RAILWAY SERVANTS.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said when Parliament dealt with the hours of labour under Factory Acts, these Acts did not include railway servants engaged in working railway traffic. In limiting the hours of labour in factories and workshops, Parliament had mainly in view the prevention of injury to the health of the workmen employed, and the preventing of the deterioration of the race which was likely to be caused by excessive hours of labour. These objects were as essential and important in the case of railway servants as in the case of factory workers, whilst there was this additional reason in the case of railway servants, that, owing to the dangerous nature of the occupation, there was not only the risk to the life and the possible injury to the person of the workman himself, but there was likewise the risk of loss of life and possible injury to the persons of his fellow workmen and the travelling public, through excessive hours of labour depriving a workman of that amount of vigilance which was so necessary in so dangerous an occupation. It was felt, however, that the case of railways was in a somewhat different position from that of an ordinary factory and workshop. As a rule, the hours of labour could be fixed generally for factories, whilst a latitude was given to certain specified trades owing to special circumstances or being season trades. In the case of a railway, however, punctuality of locomotion was desirable in the public interest, and to avoid the risks of accidents railways were liable to be interfered with by breakdowns, by the state of the weather, and by exceptional public demands. This made it difficult for Parliament to legislate with regard to hours on railways. Railway companies were slow to co-operate in the shortening of hours of labour, so long, at least, as they could get a supply of men willing to work long hours, whilst the men themselves were tempted by the higher wages earnable to work long hours. Of late years, however, the interest of public safety has come to the front. The number of railway accidents, the appalling loss of life of railway servants and the public, and injuries to the person, had directed inquiries to be made into the causes of accidents, and the length of hours during which those concerned were on duty. All accidents, no doubt, were not traceable to excessive hours of labour; but still a good many were, and Parliament was induced to take a first and very important step with regard to the hours of labour of railway servants when it passed the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, which provided, by Section 4, that every railway should make for the Board of Trade a periodical return of the excessive hours of work on its system. That was a most important statute, but it had happened that the Board of Trade had done very little in the way of attempting to get these periodical returns. Parliament had calculated not on spasmodic but periodical returns. The Act was passed in 1889 and the first return was made in 1891, and that return had been made the basis of the return for 1901. The next return made under the Act was made in 1893, when a Liberal Government was in power, and from then until last year, when the President of the Board of Trade was pressed to obtain a return in accordance with the Act of 1889, no return had been made. The President of the Board of Trade then raised every obstacle in his power, and a Resolution was passed in this House, voted against by the Government, and the Government was defeated.

The Board of Trade took up the position that it was not for them to act on their own initiative in this matter, that there was nothing in the Act which required the intervention of anybody to set the Board of Trade in motion to compel these returns. The Act laid the obligation on the railway companies, and gave power to the Board of Trade to compel the return. The Board of Trade could not shift the responsibility which the Act had imposed on it by saying they had not been asked to move. The result had been that it had been necessary to bring another Resolution before Parliament in order to compel the right hon. Gentleman to take action on the Act of Parliament. The returns that had been made showed that an enormous benefit had been brought about in the reduction of hours of labour, and he could quite understand the position of the right hon. Gentleman in that regard; but did it not occur to the right hon. Gentleman that the very fact of that improvement rendered it necessary to enforce these returns? It had been proved that legislation had effected this result, and that it had not been brought about by anything the Board of Trade had done. It was mainly due to the Act of 1889, which provided that returns as to excessive hours might be called for at any moment. The subsequent Act of 1893 gave drastic powers to the Board of Trade with regard to excessive hours of labour, and on whom it imposed the duty of investigating as to these excessive hours of labour. Under that Act the Board of Trade were not only bound to take into consideration complaints made by any outsider, but were also bound to take into consideration "either any such representations or otherwise." That word "otherwise" had been inserted there in order that the Act of 1893 should be read with the Act of 1889. If it appeared to the Board of Trade, either through representations after the event, or by the returns which the Board of Trade had received under the Act of 1889, or if it appeared to the Board of Trade as a result of an inspection by their own inspectors, that there were men being worked an excessive number of hours, it was their duty to intervene. He was not surprised that there should be discontent at the inaction of the Board of Trade, which took so narrow a view of their duty. The Board of Trade took the narrow view that they were not expected to act on their own initiative, but it would be most unfair to say that a servant of a railway company should have to make complaint, and thereby run a risk of losing either his employment or his promotion.

So much for the workman; but the travelling public were interested in this matter. Their safety was at stake, and when it was shown that accidents were largely the result of excessive hours of labour, it was in the interest of the public that these workmen should not be allowed to work an excessive number of hours. Nothing could be more obvious than that in this matter the Board of Trade had mistaken their duty. They had assumed that they had to wait for complaints, but that was not so. Although they were bound to attend to a complaint, that did not relieve them from acting on their own responsibility. They should take action on their own initiative in the same way as the Home Office did with regard to factories.

Then again, with regard to the prevention of accidents, obligations were imposed on the Board of Trade to make new rules. That should not depend on the initiative of any person whatever; that was a requirement of the Act of Parliament. The Board of Trade might say it was not compulsory, but when Parliament gave instructions to a Department they relied on their instructions being carried out without a word. The difficulty was to convince the right hon.

Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that he was to carry out the policy of Parliament and do certain things. These rules affected the safety of those employed, and the Act laid it on the Board of Trade to see that the rules were carried out. If they were not carried out, the Board of Trade must appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners, and if that Board were satisfied that these rules were reasonable, and that they were not carried out, they could impose penalties for their not being carried out. It was obvious that if we were to have rules it was necessary that there should be power given to see them carried out. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade could not say that he could not get the money. The money had been voted for two years for two additional sub-inspectors, and therefore he could not complain against the House of Commons or the Treasury. But the right hon. Gentleman had not yet appointed these additional sub-inspectors, which it was his duty to do. If there were any defects in existing legislation they could ask the President of the Board of Trade to bring in that legislation. But it was the first time he had ever heard that it was necessary to apply for an Act of Parliament to compel the Board of Trade to do that which the law permitted them to do. He was sure that no Member of the House would grudge the employment of additional sub-inspectors if that would tend to promote the safety of railway servants. He begged to move.

*MR. BELL (Derby), in seconding the Motion, expressed his obligation to his hon. friend the Member for Mid Lanark for bringing it forward, and for the opportunity afforded him of meeting such a large number of railway directors. He was pleased to see these Gentlemen turn up when a Motion of this kind was being discussed. His hon. friend had referred very fully to the long hours worked by railway servants in this country. He found from the return which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had obtained, that in December, 1901, there were no less than 216,219 cases of hours worked over twelve on railways in the United Kingdom. There were 109,000 cases of men who had been on duty for thirteen hours, 58,000 for fourteen hours, 21,000 for fifteen hours, 13,000 for sixteen hours, 6,500 for seventeen hours, and 8,000 for eighteen hours and over. Out of the total of 8,087 cases where the men were on duty for eighteen hours and over, 2,890 were credited to the Great Central Railway, with only 3,029 men employed. The total number of cases in which thirteen to eighteen hours had been worked were on the Great Central Railway, 20,922; London and North-Western, 10,222; Great Northern, 10,618; Great Western, 34,349; South-Eastern and Chatham, 10,051; Caledonian, 7,995; North British, 20,175; and one small Welsh railway which employed only ninety had a record of 878 cases of men working from thirteen to eighteen hours and over. There was another side to the question, perhaps equally as unpleasant, if not so dangerous, and that was when the men resumed duty with an insufficient interval for rest. There were 21,000 cases where the men resumed duty with less than nine hours rest after having worked from thirteen to eighteen hours and over on the previous day. There were thirty-one cases where work was resumed with only one hour's interval for rest, twenty-two cases with two hours interval, thirty-three cases with three hours interval, sixty-two with four hours, 173 with five hours, 495 with six hours, 1,414 with seven hours, and 18,746 with eight hours interval. One hundred and eighteen of these cases occurred in Ireland, where there was not a very large number of railway men employed. One thousand one hundred and ninety of the cases occurred on the South Eastern Railway, and the little Welsh railway that he had formerly referred to had the worst record.

It might be said by some hon. Members that it was practically impossible to work railways within reasonable limits of time for the men. Now the London and North Western Railway employed considerably more men than any other company, and they had only 3,771 cases of men who worked above twelve hours. Surely if one great railway could do that the other great railways could follow suit if they chose. Last year, when this subject was being discussed, the late Member for Leeds, Mr. Jackson, said that he had known cases where men had been on duty for four or five hours and not able to go on waiting for connection, and yet these men were counted as having done full duty; and when the hon. Member for Battersea talked of a driver being twenty hours on the foot-plate of his engine Mr. Jackson interjected that there was no such case. Now, on the Great Northern Railway, of which Mr. Jackson is Chairman, 3,958 engine drivers worked thirteen hours, 1,789 worked fourteen hours, 706 worked fifteen hours, 237 worked sixteen hours, 91 worked seventeen hours, and 127 worked eighteen hours, and upwards. The return did not show details above eighteen hours, and he ventured to suggest that of the 127 who had worked eighteen hours and upwards, a considerable proportion must have been twenty hours on the foot-plate.

The powers possessed by the President of the Board of Trade had been well demonstrated by his hon. friend, and he wished to emphasise all that his hon. friend had said in regard to that matter. All that he asked was that the right hon. Gentleman should exercise these powers. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted to the House last year that the return obtained for December, 1901, was not satisfactory, and that he would call for another return last December. That, however, was giving the railway companies four months notice of what he was going to do. Special efforts were therefore made by the railway companies to keep down the number of hours worked by the men for that particular month, and the right hon. Gentleman would find, if he made close inquiry, that some of the companies had definitely stated to the superintendents and foremen that for certain reasons the return of the number of men who worked more than twelve hours should be *nil* for that month. Large bodies of men were distributed from the centres all over the line in order that relief might be provided for keeping down the number of hours worked; but when December was over these men returned to the centres from whence they came, and the number of hours worked was afterwards considerably longer than in December. He ventured to predict than when the return for December last is issued the number of cases where the men worked more than twelve hours would be nearly blank. He wanted to impress on the President of the Board of Trade that he should not accept that return as satisfactory, or as typical of the number of hours worked; and that in future a return should be got without warning being given to the railway companies. So much on the question of the number of hours worked. He now desired to call the attention of the House to the serious number of accidents which occurred on the railways in the United Kingdom. He knew there was not a single member interested in railways who did not desire to see the number of accidents reduced. It would be inhuman to suggest that any director wished to see the existing number of serious accidents maintained; but he was candidly of opinion that there was insufficient supervision by the responsible officials of the companies, and, might he say, insufficient pressure put upon them to reduce the accidents to the lowest possible limits. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in his reply a fortnight ago compared the number of accidents with the number of miles run. That was a very unfair comparison, because the railway companies, for economic reasons, were turning out more powerful locomotives and the consequence was that the number of miles run showed a great deal less than formerly, although the traffic was greater. For instance, the London and North Western Company's engines ran 1,100,000 less miles in 1902 than they did in the previous year, notwithstanding an increase in the volume of traffic to the extent of £1,000,000 sterling.

The Return for 1902 showed that 443 men were killed, and 3,713 injured in connection with the working of trains and the movement of vehicles; while thirty-three were killed, and 9,929 were injured otherwise than by the movement of vehicles, making a grand total of 476 killed, and 13,642 injured. In considering the percentage of deaths and injuries to the number of men employed it was manifestly absurd to take the total number of railway *employees*, which included clerks and many others who ran no risks in their occupations. The object of the Motion before the House did not apply to those employed in offices, but only to what might be termed dangerous employments on railways. He had extracted half a-dozen grades whose occupations might be said to be dangerous, and those who suffered from excessive hours. There were twenty drivers killed, and 313 injured; forty-six porters killed and 480 injured; twenty three firemen killed, and 470 injured; 101 platelayers killed, and 128 injured; forty-four goods guards and brakesmen killed, and 779 injured. The total number of the latter employed was 15,708, and the proportion of killed was one in 357, and of injured, one in twenty. There were thirty-four shunters killed and 587 injured. The number of these was 10,841 and the proportion of killed was one in 318, and of injured one in eighteen. The total number in these six grades was 268 killed, and 2,747 injured, or an average over the whole lot of one killed to 719 employed, and one injured to every seventy men employed. Now these were the grades of occupation upon which they were asking the right hon. Gentleman to exercise the powers already conferred upon him of inspection with a view to prevent these accidents occurring.

There were certain railway premises already inspected under the Workshops and Factories Acts. The number of men employed in these premises was 70,922, and of these thirteen were killed, and thirty-seven were injured, which worked out at one killed in every 5,455 employed, and one injured in every 4,917 employed. That was a comparatively satisfactory result, and his point was that with proper inspection of the dangerous grades the same satisfactory results would ensue. The right hon. Gentleman had referred with a good deal of satisfaction to the fact that the accidents last year were considerably below the preceding year. That was correct, and he appreciated it, but as a counter-blast to that he would point out that the Return in the *Labour Gazette* recently published showed that the number of fatal railway accidents in March last was sixteen above the corresponding month last year, and twelve above the February of this year. There was consequently an upward tendency this year. The Board of Trade issued a return for the ten years ending 1897, and he had extracted the particulars in respect of goods, guards and shunters for the ensuing five years, making a total of fifteen years. The total number of goods guards and shunters employed in 1888 was 13,678. The total employed in 1902 was 26,549. During that period of fifteen years, 1,176 of these men were killed and 16,508 were injured, making a total of killed and injured in the two grades he had mentioned of 17,684. Taking the mean number of men employed over the period of fifteen years, viz., 20,108, no less than 17,684 were killed or injured during that period. That was certainly too horrible to be allowed to continue, and he hope the right hon. Gentleman would not si with equanimity and calculate those accidents per mile.

He would take it in another way. During that period of fifteen years 1,180 men were killed or injured each year, out of 20,108 men employed. That was too serious for the House of Commons or any Government Department to trifle with He was bound to say that the responsibility for that high mortality which fell on the Board of Trade continued to be very great; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would exercise his powers and do what he could to reduce the number of those terrible accidents. He did not wish to weary the House; but it was necessary for him to give facts and figures in order to make his case clear. He would quote extracts from the reports of the Inspecting Officers, the Assistant Inspecting Officers and the Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department of the Board of Trade. In a report of an accident on the North British Railway on the 14th May, Major Pringle, the Inspecting Officer, said—

> "The derailment may be directly ascribed to the fact that guard Wilson whilst holding a pole in position during a sticking or propping operation stumbled over a crossing and fell; in doing so he allowed the pole to fall to the ground; one end of the pole became jambed against one of the chairs or rails on the siding road, and the other struck the axle-box moving on the down line, thus causing the wagon to be derailed into the 6-foot way."

Major Pringle added—

> "Of the two methods of use on railways, namely, roping and propping, both are dangerous to the men engaged in the operation."

Reporting on an accident on the Great Western Railway on the 22nd August, the Inspector said that the accident was one which might be expected where tow-roping was used. On the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway there was an accident on 8th July in which goods guard Joseph Bates was injured, and the Inspector reported:—

"This method of coupling brake vans appears to be a common operation both at Normanton and at other places of this Company's system, and I do not think that Bates can be blamed for adopting it in this case. I consider that the operation is unnecessarily dangerous, and it is to be hoped that the company will issue and enforce instructions for its discontinuance."

On the same railway an accident occurred on 18th July at the Exchange Station at Liverpool, and the inspecting officer said in his report:—

"The loop line leading from No. 1 siding is not the most desirable position to place carriages requiring such attention, but I understand that arrangements will be made to perform this work while the carriages are standing on the platform road in future."

Reporting on an accident on the North British Railway on July 25th the inspector said—

"In accordance with special instructions issued by the company it is necessary for the guard to ride on the leading vehicle of every train while it is being propelled up the Tranent branch, which is about a mile in length. In order to enable the guards to perform this duty safely I consider that a brake van or other suitable vehicle should be provided for their use."

In a report on an accident on the South Eastern and Central Railway on the 16th of July the inspector said—

"Tow-roping is always attended with considerable risk, and at this place the danger of such an operation is greatly increased by the presence of some point-rod boxing which stands about fifteen inches high and occupies most of the six feet space between the main line and the siding"—

the very place where the men had to work. The inspector proceeded—

"The work can be performed by other means, and to avoid the recurrence of such an accident I would recommend that the company should strictly prohibit the use of a tow rope at this place. The point-rod boxing referred to should also be altered so that it will cause less obstruction than at present. Seeing that the operation of tow roping has been performed at this place with the knowledge of the responsible officers, I am of opinion that the company must bear a certain amount of responsibility for failing to put a stop to such a dangerous practice, and it is desirable that immediate effect should be given to the above recommendations."

An accident occurred on the same railway on the 12th of August. The driver, Roots was unfortunately charged with manslaughter, hauled from court to court, but, happily, was acquitted at the Assizes. The inspector reported as follows—

"Taking all the facts into consideration, I am of opinion that, although Roots was undoubtedly very much to blame, there were extenuating circumstances which cannot be overlooked."

The inspector then detailed the extenuating circumstances, and added—

"I would also recommend that the signal arms should be painted more regularly and kept in a cleaner condition."

He would now quote from the sub-inspector's reports. There was an accident on the Caledonian Railway at Motherwell goods yard, in which Alexander Frazer, chief yardsman, was killed, and the sub-inspector in his report said—

"There are no lamps fixed for lighting up the shunting neck in question. The night shunting is heavy, and for future safety I recommend that at least one good lamp should be fixed near the steps leading to the shunters' cabin."

There was an accident on the Cheshire lines at Warrington on the 1st September, 1902, in which Thomas Beckett, acting shunter, was killed, and the inspector reported—

"There is no doubt that Beckett did not give the attention necessary for his own safety, but at the same time it should be noticed that at the time of the mishap he had been on duty for thirteen hours. That, in my opinion, would prevent him moving as freely and be ng as watchful as is necessary with men engaged in shunting operations."

He could quote a number of other cases in which inspectors and sub-inspectors condemned the system. For the three months ending December, the inspectors and sub-inspectors of the Board of Trade condemned the railway companies in five cases of accidents from riding on buffers where brake vans ought to be provided; in two cases of fly shunting; in three cases of tow-roping; in one case of signal wires being unprotected; in six cases where look-out men should be provided; and in nine cases of insufficient lighting. On the 22nd of April, when the matter was discussed in the House, the President of the Board of Trade said that he did not blame the railway companies, and that they had to safeguard their interests. Neither did he blame the railway companies; but he was trying to safeguard the interests of their employees and to make their position better and safer. The Board of Trade issued rules early in the year before last. Objection was taken to nearly all the rules by the railway companies, and he made objections on behalf of the workmen. The objections were considered, and after consideration the rules were again re-issued; and he understood that it was practically agreed that no further objection was to be taken. However, some of the railway companies took further objection, and the rules had to be referred to the Railway and Canal Commissioners. He was sorry to have to say it, but the action of the railway companies looked like a little bit of conspiracy, although he hoped he was wrong in that conclusion. The railway companies said to the Railway and Canal Commissioners that they were only going to object to a certain number of the rules. He himself was present, and assisted the Board of Trade, in the interests of the men, to defend their own rules. The rules to which the English companies did not object were, however, objected to by the Irish companies, and were taken before the Irish courts. The Irish companies said they were not objecting to all the rules, but they objected to three rules to which the English companies had agreed, with the result that each of the rules had to be fought either in England or Ireland. The rules had now been issued by the Board of Trade, and immediately the railway companies revised their own rules and regulations. He would read one which was typical of the others. One of the Caledonian Company's rules was as follows—

> "The movement of vehicles by means of a prop or pole, or by towing with a rope or chain attached to a locomotive, is prohibited except in cases where specially authorised by the superintendent of the line."

That looked exceedingly well, but the authority of the superintendent of the line was very easy to obtain. On the 29th of August, the Caledonian Railway issued a list of stations and sidings where propping could be carried on, and they numbered no less than 261. That was simply playing with the Board of Trade. In the North British list there were 298; on the Great Eastern list, 261; and on the Great Southern and Western list, 98 stations and sidings where propping was to be allowed to continue. His plea was that the right hon. Gentleman should exercise the power conferred on him and appoint the two sub-inspectors for whom he obtained money three years ago. In the debate on 22nd of April, the right hon. Gentleman said that he himself had asked him to apply the Home Office system of factory inspection to railways, and he said that that had never been adopted by the Board of Trade. But that was the very reason why he was asking the right hon. Gentleman to adopt it now. The right hon. Gentleman had the power, but he was afraid he had not made himself familiar with the Report of the Royal Commission to inquire into the causes of Accidents to Railway Servants, on which the railway companies were represented by the Chairman of the Midland Company and a Director of the London and South-Western Company. After hearing scores of witnesses, the Commissioners reported as follows—

> "Having carefully considered the facts and figures above set out, we have come to the conclusion that the deaths incurred from injuries sustained are unnecessarily great in number, and could be diminished."

Why should there be any hesitation on the part of the Board of Trade? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman exercise his power? The Commission also said—

> "Lives that could be saved are lost; and men are injured unnecessarily."

That was a terrible indictment, and he could not understand why a State Department, having the power, should allow such a state of things to continue. Even the present general manager of the London and North-Western Railway, when under examination before the Commission, practically admitted that shunting yards ought to be inspected. The Railways Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, as he read it, gave definite power to the Board of Trade to appoint officials for the purpose of inspecting railways and seeing that the rules were carried out. The question of inspection was specifically mentioned, and he failed to see upon what the President of the Board of Trade based his contention that he had no power to inspect. Worse still, the right hon.

Gentleman declared that inspection was unnecessary. Perhaps he would tell the House how many more railway servants must be killed and injured before he took action. He heartily seconded the Motion, and hoped the evidence he had adduced would satisfy Members there was a case for inspection.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Board of Trade should exercise more vigorously the powers conferred on it by the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, and other Acts with a view of preventing excessive hours of labour by railway servants engaged in working the traffic, and of securing sufficient intervals of uninterrupted rest between the periods of duty and sufficient relief in respect of Sunday duty, and that with a view to the diminution of accidents to railway servants the appointment of additional sub-inspectors is necessary to ensure that the rules adopted under the Railways Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, are strictly observed."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

*MR. ARTHUR MORTON (Deptford) moved, as an Amendment to the Motion—

> "To leave out all the words after the word 'that,' and add 'this House notes with satisfaction the steady improvement shown in the returns of accidents on railways in the United Kingdom, and expresses the hope that the Board of Trade will continue to use all due diligence in exercising the statutory powers which it possesses under the Act relating to the regulation of the hours of railway servants and the prevention of accidents on railways.'"

He said that no one of ordinary susceptibilities could have listened to the speeches in which this Motion had been brought before the House without feeling that there was indeed considerable reason for bringing the matter forward. The roll of accidents, as recited by the seconder of the Motion, could only be described, in the words used by the late Mr. Bright on an historical occasion from those Benches, as "horrible and heart-rending." He was brought largely into contact with railway men, and he felt acutely the dangers to which they were exposed and the necessity that existed for stringent measures for the prevention of accidents. But he parted company with the mover and seconder of the Motion on the question as to where to fix the responsibility. He was not satisfied that the President of the Board of Trade was at fault. He did not rise, however, as an apologist for the right hon. Gentleman; he, doubtless, would be able to meet many of the objections and charges which had been made. He desired to express the sympathy which they on that side of the House felt for the railway men in the work they performed, and in the course of which such terrible accidents so frequently befell them. The hon. Member for Derby had directed attention to the long hours during which work was carried on, and to the nature of the accidents from which the men suffered. It had not been proved that the length of hours was due to any cause other than emergency. If it could be satisfactorily proved that railway companies deliberately, and for long periods, caused long hours to be served, it would be a strong reason for assenting to this Resolution. He was not a railway director, nor had he any connection whatever with railway companies, but he believed that railway directors had the ordinary sense of other men, and were as anxious to avoid having to give compensation and have a contented body of workmen under them as other employers were. It required more proof to establish the proposition that these long hours were worked deliberately and habitually by the companies in question. He could not see that sufficient proof had been given of neglect of duty on their part or on the part of the President of the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman's humanity and his anxiety to serve the public were well known, and it was impossible to believe that he would be guilty of any neglect of duty. At the same time, he thought it was most valuable and useful that this question should be brought before the House, as great benefit might arise from the discussion. He desired, however, that the blame should be placed on the right shoulders, and therefore begged to move the Amendment.

SIR HARRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens), in seconding the Amendment, said he could not admit that any body of Members in the House were callous to the dangers of railway servants. He cordially agreed that if it was shown by the facts to be necessary, Parliament ought to exercise a supervision over not only the legislation regulating the companies but also over the Government Department to whom the administration of that legislation was entrusted. He did not pose as the champion of the Board of Trade or of the railway companies. He sympathised with the spirit in which this Resolution had been brought forward, but he had heard nothing to substantiate the charges which had been made. The essence of the case was that the Board of Trade had not exercised its powers. The hon. Member for Derby had adopted a course of argument much to be deprecated. He had accused a leading railway company of "cooking" their return of the hours of labour.

*MR. BELL said he had not accused the company of 'cooking" their return. What he said was that they made a special effort during the month of December to avoid extra hours being worked.

SIR HARRY SETON-KARR accepted the explanation, which practically meant that the company produced a return which did not represent the ordinary state of things on the railway, and that they did it with a desire to deceive the House and the Board of Trade. He did not think that that was the kind of argument that should be advanced in the House.

*MR. BELL said that circulars were issued by railway officials in which it was distinctly stated that for particular reasons it was specially desired that the return for December should be *nil.* He had forwarded copies of those circulars to the Board of Trade.

SIR HARRY SETON-KARR thought he had accurately stated the substance of the charge, and he simply desired to deprecate that line of argument. The hon. Member then went on to say that before the Railway Commissioners the companies entered into a conspiracy. He could not think that such statements tended to strengthen the case for the Resolution. While not desiring in any way to minimise the importance of the statistics of accidents on railways quoted by the hon. Member for Derby, he contended that such statistics were absolutely worthless unless considered in relation to all the circumstances of the case and in comparison with other statistics. He had in his possession figures which he thought put a different complexion on the case. In 1891 there were 381,000 servants employed on British railways, of whom in that year 541 died from accidents. That was a large number in itself, but it was only one-sixth of 1 per cent. of the total employed. On the American railways in the same year, there were 784,000 men employed, and the number of fatal accidents was 2,660—a percentage of one-third of 1, or about double the percentage in this country. The obvious argument was that the railways in this country were safer than those in the United States, although the latter were often held up as an example for us to copy. In 1901, the number of servants on British railways had increased to 575,000, the fatal accidents had fallen to 491, and the number of non-fatal accidents was 4,200, while in 1902 the numbers had fallen still further to 435 and 3,800 respectively. In the United States in 1901, the number of railway servants was 1,071,000, and the fatal accidents numbered 2,675. That was an improvement, but the percentage was not yet so good as that on British railways. He submitted that these figures justified the statement that the British railway management was at any rate better than the American system, and that it had improved between 1891 and 1901. Another matter was with regard to the number of men killed by the coupling and uncoupling process. In the United States 198 men, as compared with fourteen in this country, were killed in the same period and 2,768 were injured. That was a larger percentage than in the United Kingdom.

Another important point to be considered was in regard to the density of traffic per mile and the number of railway servants employed. The density in this country was far greater than in the United States. This meant that although our figures and percentage were lower, the conditions under which the men in this country worked were more conducive to fatal accidents than in the United States. Therefore the figures did not bear out the case put forward by the mover and seconder of this Motion. He desired to call attention to what the Board of Trade had done. In April, 1901, the Board of Trade gave notice of their intention to make thirteen rules, and the railway companies objected to various particulars in those rules, with the result that certain modifications were made in them. The railway companies accepted ten of the rules, but on one of them they appealed to the Railway Commissioners, which was an important tribunal to whom the railway employees could forward their grievances. The Commissioners had absolute power either to reject grievances or to see that they were remedied. This appeal to the Railway Commissioners was made on 29th July, 1902, and they heard the objections of the railway companies to No. 1. of the draft rules. After due consideration they decided that those objections were reasonable. He did not suggest that there was any conspiracy in this matter, for he believed the question was treated with absolute fairness and justice. The Railway Commissioners, while passing the rules which were not objected to, ordered the Board of Trade to bring in a fresh Rule No. 1. Mr. Justice Wright, in his judgment in 1902, said the Board of Trade had been extremely successful with the bulk of these rules, and that the railway companies had accepted them with public spirit. It seemed to him that that opinion disposed of a good deal of what the mover and seconder had said.

The Act of 1893 gave railway servants the right to appeal against excessive hours; but since 1895 the number of such representations to the Board of Trade had largely decreased, and in 1901 the Board of Trade stated that the object of the Act seemed to have been gained. That was a fact and incident which seemed to undermine the whole case, and it seemed to indicate that the Board of Trade were doing their utmost to carry out the powers conferred upon them. On the 25th February, 1902, there was a debate upon this question in the House of Commons, and the hon. Member for Derby brought forward a number of cases of long hours. Prior to that date a considerable number of cases had been inquired into under the Act, and they increased to 123 in that year. If the object of that debate was to stimulate the action of the Board of Trade, then it had that effect. He thought he had said enough to show that another complexion could be put upon the facts of the case brought forward by the hon. Members for Mid Lanark and Derby. In the first place, he asked the House to remember, in regard to the hours of labour, that they were not entitled to assume that the railway companies wanted to work their employees unreasonably long hours. There was one practical reason why they should not, and it was, that overtime was an expensive business, because the men had to be paid time and a quarter. As a matter of fact he believed that the men rather liked to work overtime, because they got good pay for it. Another reason why it was against the interests of the railway companies to work the men long hours was, that they were not likely to get such good service from them. Therefore, in their own interests, the railway companies would not work their servants longer than was necessary. No evidence had been submitted to show that the men had been worked unreasonable hours. The seconder of this proposition had read out a long array of figures, which he did not think could be treated seriously, with the object of showing that the Board of Trade were not carrying out their duty. There were cases in which the companies were bound to work their men long hours—cases of fog and accident; but it had not been shown that railway servants were continuously overworked. Long hours, under such circumstances, were the inevitable result of the conditions under which railway servants worked. The same argument applied to sailors during a storm at sea, and to firemen at some great fire. In all employment where the conditions of labour were dangerous there were bound to be hours of labour which occasionally would be far longer than men ought to be called upon to work. He wished to point out that not a single instance had been given where railway men had been regularly worked for hours which were injurious to their health. He could quote cases of alleged overworking, which, upon examination, had had an entirely different complexion put upon them. He did not think the House of Commons was a tribunal in which the actual facts of any particular case could be fairly judged. If it could be shown that the Board of Trade had not carried out their duties in this respect, he for one would be only too glad to support this proposal. He would conclude by reminding the House that the railway system of the country was not a benevolent institution, but a great commercial undertaking on which the prosperity of the country depended. They were bound, within reasonable limits, to look after the conditions under which the men were employed; but, on the other hand, it was very easy for the House to go too far and interfere in a great industry so as to seriously injure its financial prosperity. Therefore, this was an argument which they must keep within its proper limits. Some hon. Members, in their anxiety to show themselves as the champions of the working classes, seemed to forget that the workmen had to earn their bread and butter, and therefore the financial prosperity of the railways was as important to them as to any other class. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that' to the end of the Question, and add the words, 'this House notes with satisfaction the steady improvement shown in the Returns of Accidents on Railways in the United Kingdom, and expresses the hope that the Board of Trade will continue to use all due diligence in exercising the statutory powers which it possesses under the Acts relating to the Regulation of the Hours of Railway Servants and the Prevention of Accidents on Railways.'"—(*Mr. Arthur Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he had given very close attention to these matters for many years. There were two points with regard to the question of hours which he could not help thinking that the President of the Board of Trade had left out of sight. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that his colleague the Colonial Secretary, in 1884, proposed that every railway company should furnish to the Board of Trade every month the details of instances of work in excess of twelve hours per day. This proposal was embodied in a Bill which he (Mr. Channing) carried to a Second Reading on May 19, 1886, and that Bill would then have passed into law but for the dissolution of 1886. The principle of these returns was then sanctioned by Parliament. Notwithstanding this nothing was done till after the Act of 1889, when returns of excessive hours were obtained for two or three different months in 1890 and 1892. These returns were, in one case, for work over twelve, in the other, for work over ten hours. Then they had an interval of some ten years, in which no return had been brought before Parliament until the one asked for by the hon. Member for Derby was granted by the President of the Board of Trade. He thought that showed a gross neglect of duty on the part of the Board of Trade. His second point was this. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman recollected the Select Committee, appointed in 1891, after the great debate on railway hours of January 23, 1891, which was reported in 1892. That Report, which was presented by the right hon. Member for Bristol, then President of the Board of Trade, stated that these returns should be periodically made, and recommended that the hours of signalmen should be not more than eight hours, and of all other branches, ten hours. These recommendations had been absolutely neglected. He would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that a return of work over twelve hours was practically valueless. They had had the opinion of a former Conservative President of the Board of Trade that ten hours was the fair limit, and returns had been presented on that basis, and in view of the decision of the House and of the Committee, it was futile to present this House with a return of work in excess of twelve hours. He would give one brief illustration of this. In the Report of the Committee which sat upon the question of railway hours, to which he had referred, he found, from the returns for December 1890, that the number of hours worked by goods railway drivers and firemen in excess of twelve was

263,369. But the return of the number of hours worked in excess of ten by the same body of men showed that they worked no less than 416,539 hours. That was at least 60 or 70 per cent. in excess of the instances of working over twelve hours. Ten years ago the House pronounced that ten hours were sufficient, and now they were still working upon the basis that twelve hours was the first point from which they could challenge whether a man was overworked or not. Those were the specific points to which he called the right hon. Gentleman's attention.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The practical effect of the Resolution which has been moved by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark is a censure on the Board of Trade for not having adequately exercised its powers under the Acts relating to the regulation of the hours of railway servants and for the prevention of railway accidents. It may be worth while for the House to know that both sets of Acts are really directed to securing the safety of railway servants and the public. Therefore, the question which we have to decide is whether the Board of Trade has or has not adequately exercised the powers which it possesses to secure the safety of railway servants and the travelling public. I admit fully the importance of that question. It is a lamentable fact that there is a deplorable loss of life in connection with the working of our railways; nobody can read the Report of the Royal Commission on the Prevention of Railway Accidents without being painfully impressed with that fact. There are certain special branches of railway work which are more dangerous than any other employment except that of the mercantile marine. It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that Parliament should have endeavoured, as far as it can reasonably be done, to check this great loss of life. There are, however, some points in connection with this matter which ought not to be lost sight of. In the first place, although the number of accidents recorded on our railways is enormous—I think that in 1902 no fewer than 10,000 railway servants suffered injuries—yet the vast majority of the accidents are not of a serious character. Under the existing regulations every accident is reported which keeps a railway servant from his work for five hours. A Committee, appointed by the Home Office, which has been inquiring into this question has recommended that no accident shall be recorded which does not involve absence from work for at least twenty-four hours. If that change is made it would greatly diminish the number of accidents which now find their way into the reports issued by the Board of Trade.

Last year 447 railway servants were killed by accidents to trains or the movement of vehicles, and 38 were killed by other accidents, making a total of 485. To these should be added the more serious, though not fatal, accidents, and I find there were 128 cases of loss of limb, and 586 cases of fracture, a total of 714. I do not wish to minimise the importance of this question, but these figures are not large when compared with the total number of non-fatal accidents, which was 10,858. I do not say this because I wish to minimise the importance of these accidents, but I want only to point out that in reading these vast figures it must not be supposed that every case represents a serious accident. It is also important to distinguish between preventable and non-preventable accidents. I am afraid that no care that could be exercised by the railway companies, no precautions which could be imposed upon them by this House, would do more than diminish to some extent the number of accidents upon railways. I fear that the nature of the employment is such that there will always be a large number both of fatal and serious accidents. But we should guard against language which is calculated to imply that even a majority of the accidents are of a character which can properly be laid to the negligence of the railway companies or to failure on the part of the Government Department to exercise the powers which Parliament has entrusted to it. I feel sure that is not so. I am perfectly ready to admit that every effort within reason should be made to diminish the number of accidents, but it must not be imagined that our utmost efforts would entirely prevent them.

Lastly, in connection with this subject, it should not be forgotten that during the last forty years there has been a remarkable diminution in the number of accidents that have occurred on railways. The Royal Commission which sat on this question has drawn attention to the fact that the accidents in 1872 were no less than three times the number that occurred in 1898, a remarkable diminution considering the large increase in the number of railway servants employed. The number of railway servants killed in 1892 was 435, and going back to 1893 I find it was 446. I do not wish to attach too much importance to the figures for any one year. It is better to take the average of years and it will be found to be not very far from the truth to say that the actual number of accidents during the ten years has not shown any marked tendency to diminish in any one year. The total for one year is about the average for the ten years. But we have to look at the comparison of the figures of accidents with the total number of railway servants. Taking into account the number of men engaged, the result is encouraging; for in 1893 the number of employees was 381,000 and in 1902 the number was 575,000; the percentage, therefore, of accidents as compared with the number of men employed has very largely diminished. A few days ago, in discussing the Board of Trade Vote I referred to the increase in train mileage, which, of course, is a material fact in estimating whether the number of accidents has or has not increased, though the hon. Member for Derby has warned me not to rely too much upon this. I do not quite understand the purport of that.

*MR. BELL: What I intended to convey was that in consequence of more powerful locomotives being used more work is done, though there is actually less train mileage. The mileage is decreasing though the traffic is increasing.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That refers to the future, but my figures have reference to the past. The hon. Member seemed to infer I was using an argument which would hereafter prove a broken reed, but allow me to say that I used the figures as I found them; and if hereafter the train mileage can be shown to have decreased, that will be cited as a circumstance to modify my calculation in an opposite direction. I have cited train mileage increase as supporting my conclusion, justified by facts, that safety of life on railways is steadily increasing year by year. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark has complained that the Board of Trade have not exercised all the powers they possess under the Prevention of Accidents Act, and he referred to a report by an inspector on an accident which occurred on the Caledonian Railway on 8th October, 1902, quoting the inspector's account of the condition of things he found on the scene of the accident. But I am entirely at a loss to understand how that argument proves that the Board of Trade has not carried out its duties under the Act, or exercised the powers conferred on it. Wherever an inspector makes a report of the kind in question, the attention of the company is called to it by the Board of Trade, and the Board invariably presses, and generally presses with success, that the deficiency of appliances or arrangements which have been the cause, or partly the cause, of the accident shall be remedied. It so happens that in this case one of the deficiencies to which the inspector called attention was the absence of sufficient lighting. The accident occurred on 8th October, 1902, and it was only in August, 1902, that the Board of Trade, by their rules under the Accidents Act, became possessed of the power to insist that the companies should make this change. I hope and believe that by this time the company have taken steps, or are taking steps, to remedy these defects.

With regard to the question of appointing two additional sub-inspectors, whose salaries have already been provided for, it is probable that the appointments will be made during the current year. Under the Accidents Act two additional officers—assistant inspecting officers—have already been appointed. They were appointed early in 1901, when we had some reason to hope that the rules would come into operation much earlier than, as a matter of fact, they have done. Since the rules came into operation these inspectors have inspected a number of shunting yards which have been alleged to be insufficiently lighted. They have inspected forty-six such yards, and I understand that the companies have expressed their readiness to carry out the changes which are considered necessary. The hon. Member for Derby has not sufficiently borne in mind this fact. The Act mentions twelve special subjects in respect to which the Board is authorised to make rules; and the Board have made rules with respect to nine of those subjects. A rule on another subject is still before the Railway Commissioners, and with regard to the other two it is thought better to proceed by special order rather than by rule. The nine rules have been in a sense operative since August last year, but in five cases the time at which they will become really effective has been fixed at a year, two years, or even a longer period from the time when the rules were made. That has been done in full accordance with the views of the Royal Commission, which recognised the necessity for giving the railway companies time to deal with these matters. It was also done on the advice of the Expert Committee appointed by the Board of Trade—a Committee of which Lord James, the Chairman of the Railway Commission, was president. I do not think I have heard any complaints from the hon. Member for Hereford that the postponement of the effective operation of these rules was in itself unreasonable. I can assure the House that the Board of Trade are fully conscious of the desirability of carrying out these rules and insisting on their observance by the railway companies. The whole of the inspecting staff has full instructions to call the attention of the companies to any infringement of the rules, and, in addition, they have the great advantage of the complaints made to them by the society represented by the hon. Member for Derby. In view of the fact that we have had only a few months experience of the working of the rules under the Act, I think it is a little early to charge the Board of Trade with neglect in giving effect to the powers which they possess under that Act. We shall watch the working of the Act most carefully, and will certainly appoint an additional staff as it appears necessary; but I cannot honestly think that up to the present time any case has been made out against the Board of Trade for not having properly exercised their powers under that Act.

As to the complaint of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark in regard to the action of the Board of Trade under the Hours Act of 1893, I think he treated the Board rather unfairly. The circumstances are within the recollection of the House. There was no desire to resist the Motion for a return under that Act; I only desired to make the return correspond in all points to the previous return under the Act. That demand, I submit, was only reasonable, but it was resisted from the other side of the House, and, on a division, the Government were defeated by a small majority. The hon. Member complained that the Board waited to be moved to call for this return by a Motion of the House. Again the hon. Member has done us scant justice, for the real fact is that the Act of 1889 was commonly supposed to have been superseded altogether by the Act of 1893. I am perfectly willing to admit that the Act of 1889, which enables the Board of Trade to call for returns, was not repealed by the Act of 1893.

MR. CHANNING: They are to be read together.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not repealed, but the general idea undoubtedly was, and it was an opinion shared by the Board of Trade, that the Act of 1889 had been superseded by the Act of 1893. The hon. Member may possibly say that I ought to have known that the powers conferred by the Act of 1889 were still in force. I admit that, but I think the error was venial, considering that it was shared by all the officials of the Board of Trade. But at any rate when I came to see that the Board had still the power I was perfectly ready to call for a Return under the Act of 1899, and I did call for it, and since then, without being moved to do so at all, I have called for a second Return. I really think that the best reply I can give to the allegation that the Board of Trade has not sufficiently discharged its duty under the Act of 1893 is to give the House a statement of what we actually have done under that statute. In the first place we have recorded and looked into over 700 complaints. Of these 223 have related to the hours of signalmen, 139 affected guards and brakesmen, 124 enginemen, and 115 fixed station men. These numbers, however, give really no idea whatever of the number of men actually affected, for each complaint may affect a very considerable number of men.

The Board of Trade, when it receives a complaint from any locality, invariably asks for a Return from the railway company concerned, and sometimes from the neighbouring companies. It usually demands a revised schedule of hours, and that schedule affects the hours of work in many cases of a large number of men who have not been referred to in the original complaint. As regards the success of the action taken by the Board of Trade under the Act, it is necessary to distinguish between the men employed at fixed stations and the men employed in connection with trains and the moving of vehicles. I believe the effect of the Act has been very materially to reduce the hours of men at fixed stations, such as signalmen and shunters. I confess we have not been so successful in the case of men working in trains, such as enginemen, guards, and brakemen, in whose case the difficulty encountered by the companies is much greater, owing to fogs, bad weather, and other causes which it is impossible for any railway company entirely to guard against. But, nevertheless, I am convinced that, even in their case, the effect of the Act has been to very considerably reduce their total hours of work. I admit that the actual hours worked do not always compare favourably with the book time, but it is the constant effort of the Board of Trade to bring the actual hours more into correspondence with the book hours.

Now I come to the Returns which we have asked for under the Act of 1889 in the last two years, showing the hours worked in excess of twelve. In asking for these Returns we have followed the precedent set by the 1893 Returns. The Return of 1901 undoubtedly did show a very considerable improvement over the Return of 1893, and, as that was a surprise Return, none of these influences to which the hon. Member for Derby called attention could have had effect upon it. It is satisfactory to notice that the greatest improvement has taken place in connection with the largest railway companies. I do not wish to weary the House, but it may interest hon. Members to hear a statement of the figures showing, as regards goods guards and brakemen, and goods engine drivers and firemen, the percentage of days in excess of twelve hours worked in December, 1901 as compared with December, 1891. On the London and North Western Railway the percentage in 1901 was ·562 against 1·24 in 1891 for goods guards and brakemen, and 1·26 against 14·25 for goods engine drivers and firemen; on the Great Western Railway the figures were 14·90 against 19·98 for goods guards and brakemen and 23·15 against 38·96 for goods engine drivers and firemen; on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway 6·10 against 40·58 for goods guards and brakemen, and 9·37 against 58·43 for goods engine drivers and firemen; on the Midland Railway 18·04 against 25·05 for goods guards and brakemen, and 10·53 against 30·59 for goods engine drivers and firemen; on the Cambrian Railway 5·10 against 43·91 for goods guards and brakemen, and 9·13 against 35·55 for goods engine drivers and firemen; on the Caledonian Railway 6·82 against 20·08 for goods guards and brakemen, and 11·31 against 32·18 for goods engine drivers and firemen; and on the Great Northern of Ireland ·76 against 25·31 for goods guards and brakemen, and 7·18 against 11·18 for goods engine drivers and firemen. I think all the great companies show similar improvements. These are very remarkable figures, and I do not think they can be attributed to anything else but the working of the Act of 1893.

The hon. Member for Derby tells us, and I think he is perfectly right so far as my knowledge goes, that the Return for 1902 will be a great deal better. The hon. Member has been good enough to send me the circulars to which he referred. I do agree with him that in two or three cases these circulars are of a very improper character. At the same time I do not myself think that the results, whatever they may be, in the Return for 1903, will be very much vitiated by the few circulars which I am ready to acknowledge were sent out. On the whole I think from what I have said it will appear that the working of the Act by the Board of Trade shows very great improvement, both as regards hours and the number of accidents. I do not question for a moment that further improvement is desirable, and it will be the earnest endeavour of the Board of Trade to bring about that improvement as far as we can by a vigorous working of the Act; but I submit that we are not amenable to the charge the Resolution brings against us, and therefore I shall vote for the Amendment of my hon. friend, which appears to give the hon. Member for Derby all he really desires. I venture to say that he and the mover should be content to withdraw the Motion in the form in which they have put it on the Paper, and accept the Amendment moved by my hon. friend the Member for Deptford, in order that it may be passed by the unanimous vote of the House.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeenshire, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has had so many facts to give us, and he has felt it his duty to go so minutely into the case, that the time left for comments on his reply is extremely short. I do not complain of that. The House will easily understand that it is absolutely impossible for me or any other Member to deal in detail with the statistics which my hon. friend the Member for Derby has brought before the House, or with the answer given by the President of the Board of Trade. All I can do is to try to state to the House what is the general impression left on my mind by the case made for the Motion and the case made by the President of the Board of Trade. We have before us a Motion and an Amendment. The Motion says that the Board of Trade has not been sufficiently energetic in using the powers Parliament has placed at its disposal. The Amendment implies that the Board of Trade has been sufficiently active, and expresses a benevolent wish that it may continue to act with due diligence in the matter. Therefore we are asked to say whether we think that the Department has done all that might have been done during the last ten years in the case of the Act of 1893, and during the last three years in the case of the Act of 1900. I have listened with great attention to the President of the Board of Trade. I do not complain of the tone and spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman approached the question, and I feel perfectly certain there exists at the Board of Trade a genuine desire to put the powers of the Act in force and to reduce the number of accidents, which, as has been admitted, is deplorable, and which I would say, considering the progress that has been made, is not creditable to a country like ours. We cannot make any comparison with the United States. I entirely deprecate comparisons of that kind. The United States are not so careful of human life as it is our habit in this country to be. What does the answer of the right hon. Gentleman amount to? With respect to the question of accidents it is substantially this, that many accidents are not preventable. That might have been said ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. Every action Parliament has taken has reduced the number of accidents, and we have every reason to believe that there are still a number of preventable accidents which the energetic carrying out of the powers Parliament has given would further reduce. Then the President of the Board of Trade says he has got power, and even a vote of money, to appoint two additional sub-inspectors and that he has not yet done so. I confess that I did not gather why these two sub-inspectors have not been appointed, except for the reason that only four of the rules have been put in force. But if there are only four rules in force now, the opportunity would be an excellent one for endeavouring to ascertain at once by the examination of a number of yards whether these four rules are being properly observed, and I cannot conceive that there would not be enough work for the two new inspectors. It would be better to deal with that branch of the subject before the remaining rules come into force. Further than that, sub-inspectors are able to do a kind of work which, I understand, the chief inspectors cannot very well do. The sub-inspectors must be practical railway men taken from the railway service, and therefore they will be conversant with a number of matters which the chief inspectors do not know so well about.

On the question of hours the plea of the President of the Board of Trade is substantially that considerable improvements have been effected, but he admits that the improvements have been least in the case of the men employed in the moving of trains. These are the men who are concerned, not only with the safety of themselves, but of the public, and therefore I look upon that as a serious drawback. The real question for the House to consider is whether enough has been done. I do not wish to underrate or ignore the difficulties of the Department and the necessity of carrying the Railway Commission with them, when cases are carried before the Commissioners. But I cannot say that as much has been achieved as might have been achieved, or that the Board of Trade is entitled to receive that complete approval of their action which the adoption of the Amendment would give them. I do not think, however, that the Motion of my hon. friend ought to be regarded as hostile to the Board of Trade, I hope that my remarks will be received as having been offered rather with the desire to strengthen its hands in the performance of a duty which Parliament has laid upon it.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 126; Noes, 161. (Division List No. 75.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*
Allan,CharlesP.(*Glouc.Stroud*
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter(*Lanark*
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(*Galwy*
Dewar,JohnA.(*Inverness-shire*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope John Deans (*Fife, West*
Hutchinson,Dr.CharlesFredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell,Edw.(*Fermanagh,N.*
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Donnell John (*Mayo, S.*)
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles E. (*Stafford*)
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick B*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.CR.(*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas,Sir A. (*Glamorgan,E.*
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomas,F.Freeman-(*Hastings*
Thomson, F. W. (*York,W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tully, Jasper
Warner,Thomas Courtenay,T.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, F.W. (*Norfolk, Mid*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wood, James
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES,
Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Bell.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.HonSirH
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*

Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M(*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Craig, Charles Curtis(*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hon. J. E. (*Elgin&Nrn.*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn G R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hobhouse, Rt. Hn H. (*Soms't, E.*
Hogg, Lindsay
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John(*Kent Faversham*
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Joseph(*Monm'th*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool.*
Lawson, John Grant(*Yorks N. R*
Lees, Sir Elliot (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick, N. S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(*Edinburgh W*
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn A Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (*Isle of Wight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, H C(*North'mb. Tyneside*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, E. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G. (*Oxf'd Uni.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset.*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Hy. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Debate arising.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXXI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Earl of Hardwicke*	Read 1^a 27th April (444) Read 2^a Committee, Report Read 3^a and passed 28th April (595) Royal Assent 30th April (913)
Berwickshire County Town		Read 2^a 4th May (1142)
Betting	*Lord Davey*	Read 1^a 28th April (640)
Bishopric of Bristol [H.L.]	*Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*	Read 1^a 30th April (931) Read 2^a 5th May (1329)
*Borough Funds		Read 1^a 5th May (1325)
*Contracts (India Office)		Read 1^a 27th April (444)
*Land Registers (Scotland) [H.L.]	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Committee 30th April (918) Committee 5th May (1328)
*Naval Forces	*Earl of Selborne*	Read 1^a 27th April (444) Read 2^a 27th April (922) Committee Report 4th May (1142)
Shops (Early Closing)	*Lord Avebury*	Read 3^a and passed 28th Apri (595)

(B.) House of Commons.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aged Pensioners (No. 3)	*Mr. Goulding*	Read 1^o 4th May (1206)
Architects (Registration)	*Mr. Atherley Jones*	Read 1^o 24th April (432)
*Army Annual	*Mr. Brodrick*	Royal Assent 30th April (931)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Borough Funds	*Mr. Walter Long*	Consideration 30th April (1064) Read 3° and passed 4th May (1324)
Burgh Police (Scotland)	*Mr. Asher*	Read 1° 6th May (1628)
Cheap Trains	*Captain Norton*	Bill Withdrawn 24th April (358)
*County Councils (Bills in Parliament)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Consideration 27th April (591) Read 3° and passed 28th April (776)
*Education (Borrowing)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 23rd April (228)
Elementary Education (Amendment)	*Mr. Heywood Johnstone*	Committee and Report 24th April (432)
Home Industries	*Colonel Denny*	Read 1° 23rd April (227)
*Irish Land	*Mr. Wyndham*	Second Reading 4th May (1206) (1285) Second Reading 5th May (1376) (1452)
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-renewal)	*Mr. Butcher*	Read 2° 24th April (358)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales)	*Mr. Herbert Roberts*	Second Reading (adjourned) 1st May (1133)
*London Education	*Sir William Anson*	Second Reading 28th April (663) (739) Second Reading 29th April (799)
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	*Sir Gilbert Parker*	Read 2° 1st May (1074)
Military Lands	*Mr. Charles Allen*	Read 1° 6th May (1522)
Out-door Relief (Pensioners)	*Colonel Blundell*	Committee Report } 30th April (1064)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Sir R. Finlay*	Read 2° 6th May (1583)
*Public Offices (Dublin)	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Read 1° 4th May (1206)
Shipowners Negilence (Remedies)	*Mr. Harry Samuel*	Read 1° 27th April (481)
Trades Disputes (Arbitration)	*Mr. Nannetti*	Bill withdrawn 5th May (1364)
Trade Marks	*Mr. Fletcher Moulton*	Read 1° 1st May (1135)
Vagrant Children	*Sir John Gorst*	Read 1° 27th April (481)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1903.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[*In continuation of List given in previous volume.*]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and Amending Acts,—Copy of Scheme under The Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and Amending Acts, for the Management of the Charity of Chew's Foundation, in the parish of Dunstable, in the county of Bedford, founded by Deed of 16th September, 1724 [36 and 37 Vic., c. 87, s. 15].	23 April	Two months
Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages) (Felt Hats),—Copy of Order, dated 22nd April, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the making of Felt Hats and repealing the existing Order of the 30th November, 1897 [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)].	30 April	40 days

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1903.

APRIL 21—*MAY* 6.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote. Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Accidents
Electric Trams—Accidents caused by, Protection of the Public.
Q. Sir J. Dimsdale; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *Apr. 30*, 939.

Acland-Hood, Sir A. [Somersetshire, Wellington]
Bagdad Railway—Opportunity for discussion of Question as to British participation in Scheme for Construction of, *Apr. 22*, 114.

Africa, Central
British Protectorate, Famine in—Steps to alleviate distress—Increase of Mortality.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 6*, 1512.

Africa, East
British Protectorate—Report by Mr. A. Whyte on recent travels along seacoast, Presented, *May 5*, 1327, 1363.

Concessions in—Grant of Return relative to.
Q. Mr. Malcolm; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 27*, 464.

Africa, South
Martial Law, Papers relating to Administration of, Presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.

Mines, Recruitment of Labour from British East Africa Protectorate, for work in —Protest of Blantyre Chamber of Agriculture.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 655.

Africa, South—*cont.*
Simonstown, Construction of Docks—Employment of Continental Workmen and Indian Coolies, to the disadvantage of British and South African Workmen—Observance of Fair Wages Resolution.
Q. Mr. K. Hardie; *A.* Mr. Pretyman, *May 4*, 1189.

Aged Pensioners (No. 3) Bill
c. 1R.* *May 4*, 1206.

Agnew, Sir A. [Edinburgh, S.]
State Forest, Establishment of, in Scotland, proposed, *Apr. 22*, 108.

Agrarian Outrages, Ireland
Return Presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.

Agricultural Products
Rates for transport of, on Great Western Railway—*Debate* [H.C.], *Apr. 21*, 69.

Agricultural Rates Act
Exchequer Grants under, issued to England, Scotland and Ireland respectively—Statistics.
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 21*, 7.

Agriculture, Board of
Salaries and Expenses, Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 43.

Alaska
Boundary Dispute — Canadian Government's Objection to Selection of Jurists made by United States to act on Tribunal.
Q. Mr. C. Devlin; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 951.
Convention between United Kingdom and Denmark, for adjustment of boundary between Canada and Alaska, Presented, *Apr. 27*, 436.

Alcohol
Taxation of.
Debate on Budget Statement, Apr. 23, 283.

Aliens
Bankrupt Aliens—Grant of Return relative to.
Q. Mr. Forde Ridley; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 30*, 954.
Immigrants, Number of, rejected by United States and Canada now maintained at British Expense.
Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *May 1*, 1073.

Allan, Sir W. [Gateshead]
"Bulwark" and "Formidable"—Collision between—Extent of Damage, *Apr. 30*, 949.
Harbours on Devon and Cornwall Coast. *Apr. 22*, 184.

Allen, Mr. C. P. [Gloucestershire, Stroud]
Military Stores for South Africa—Shipment of, *Apr. 27*, 462.

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition), Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 4*, 1138.
c. 1R.* *May 5*, 1361.

America
see United States of America.

Argentina
Cattle introduced from.
Observations in Com., Apr. 21, 43, 59.

Anson, Sir W.—*Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education* [Oxford University]
Education Act — Town and County Councils—Forfeit of Money by Postponement of Adoption of Act—Case of Durham County Council, *Apr. 27*, 472.
Local Education Authority and By-laws for School Attendance—Regulations with regard to Making of New Laws and Continuation of Existing ones, *Apr. 29*, 781.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 764.
London Education Bill—Charge on Exchequer—Additional Burden Thrown on Ratepayers, *Apr. 28*, 659.
Midwives Board, Meetings of—Issue of Minutes of Meetings, *May 6*, 1507.
Schools, Transfer of—Power of Transfer in Hands of School Managers—Powerlessness of Voluntary Schools Associations to Effect Transfer, *Apr. 27*, 449.

Architects (Registration) Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 24*, 432.
1R* *Apr. 24*, 432.

Arms and Ammunition
Bullets necessary in Warfare with Savages.
Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 30, 992, 993, 1002.
Dum-dum Bullet, use of.
Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 30, 990, 992.
Guns.
15-Pounder Gun, pattern of dissimilar to 1885 pattern—Shooting capacities of 1885, 1889, and Ehrherdt Guns respectively.
Q. Major Seely; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 28*, 650.
Rate of Fire of 1885 Field Gun, 1899 Field Gun, and Ehrherdt Quick-firing Field Gun.
Q. Major Seely; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 949.
Rate of Fire of Quick-firing and Non-Quick-firing Guns—Consideration of on Vote in the Estimates.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 949.
Service Bullet, alleged inefficiency of in Somaliland Campaign—General Manning's Despatch.
Qs. Mr. A. Lee; *As.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 461.

Army
Secretary of State—Right Hon. St. John Brodrick.
Under-Secretary—Earl of Hardwicke.
Financial Secretary—Lord Stanley.
Army Corps—Effective Strength and Composition of First, Second, Third, and Fourth Army Corps, Grant of Return relative to, Date of Issue, etc.
Qs. Mr. W. Churchill; *As.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 458; *May 4*, 1192.
Army Order No. 9, Limitations of—Extension proposed.
Q. Mr. J. Hutton; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 27*, 456.
Artillery.
Donegal Artillery—Recruiting, Cessation of.
Q. Dr. Thompson; *A.* Lord Stanley, *May 4*, 1192.
65th Battery Royal Field Artillery, Strength of — Non-inclusion in Units of First Army Corps.
Q. Mr. W. Churchill; *A.* Lord Stanley, *May 4*, 1191.
Canteens and Regimental Institutes, Report Presented, *May 4*, 1141; *May 5*, 1363.
Commissions, Address for Return as to number of Commissions granted during years 1899-1902, *Apr. 30*, 938.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
Contracts.
Fair Wages Resolution—Violation of, at Messrs. Vickers, Son, & Maxim's Brightside Works.
Q. Mr. K. Hardie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 4*, 1188.
Messrs. Chapman's Contract for manufacture of Sword Bayonets — Employment of Women in place of men at reduced wages.
Qs. Mr. K. Hardie; *As.* Lord Stanley, *May 6*, 1509.
Discipline—Case of Colonel Kinloch, *see* title Kinloch.
Expenditure—Excesses—Return showing items of expenditure, Presented, *Apr. 30*, 917.
Garrison Regiments, Royal.
Address for Return showing cost, etc., of Regiment stationed at Malta, *Apr. 30*, 939.
Return — Inclusion of battalions stationed at Malta.
Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 784.
Imperial Yeomanry, *see* that title.
Medical Department, Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 21*, 4; *Apr. 27*, 438.
Military Law and Procedure, Debate on, *Apr. 28*, 611.
Military Works and Stores, Return relative to, Address for, *Apr. 30*, 939.
Militia, *see* that title.
Officers' Expenses—Report of Committee Presented, *Apr. 27*, 437.
Pensions.
Duke, Henry, Case of—Increase of Pension, proposed.
Q. Mr. Joyce; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Stapleton, John, Case of—Application for Increase of Pension.
Q. Mr. Joyce; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Returns Respecting Volunteers, Royal Garrison Regiments, Army Reserve and Military Works, Grant of.
Qs. Mr. W. Churchill; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 28*, 650.
Rough Riders and Scouts—Enlistment of men under Army Height Regulation as Rough Riders and for Scouting Purposes.
Q. Sir T. Dewar; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 947.
Somaliland Expedition—*Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 30*, 963.

Army Act
Colonel Kinloch, Case of, *see* that Title.
Military Law and Procedure, *see* that Title.

Army Annual Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 444.
2R.* *Apr. 28*, 595.
3R.* *Apr. 28*, 595.
Royal Assent, *Apr. 30*, 913.

Army Estimates
Provisions, Forage and other Supplies—£6,895,000, *Com. Apr. 30*, 963.
Somaliland Expedition, *Apr. 30*, 964.

Army Guild of the Holy Standard
Proposed Service at St. Paul's Cathedral—Attitude of Bishop of London—*Apr. 30*, 929.
Relations of, to Army and War Office—Nature and powers of, etc.
Q. Mr. A. Taylor; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 458.

Arnold-Forster, Mr. H. O.—*Secretary to the Admiralty* [Belfast, W.]
"Bulwark" and "Formidable"—Collision between, Extent of Damage—Alleged prohibition of Account of Incident being sent home, *Apr. 30*, 949.
Cruiser "Pique" and Sloop "Rosario"—Prize-firing records, *Apr. 28*, 646.
Dockyards, Storehouse Staff—Reorganisation of, under Consideration, *Apr. 22*, 109.
Forth, New Naval Base on the Forth—Acquisition of Land for Erection of Houses for Employees, Erection of Town on Scientific Principles, According to the Plans in Mr. Howard's Work on Garden Cities, *May* 6, 1508.
Gunnery—Defective, *Apr. 23*, 213.
Military Stores for South Africa—Shipment of, *Apr. 27*, 462.
Naval Plumbers—Transfer of, to Rating of Electricians, *Apr. 23*, 211.
Niclausse Boilers—Results of Admiralty Experiments, *Apr. 28*, 647.
Obsolete Warships—Stipulation relating to Vessels being broken up in United Kingdom—Abrogation of, in case of Sale of Ships at Devonport, *May 6*, 1509.
Pacific Cable, Consultation with Admiralty in respect of Route of, *Apr. 29*, 782.
Portsmouth Dockyard Storehousemen, *Status* of, *May 6*, 1502.
Reservists—Men employed in Royal Dockyards—Number of, on Mobilisation List, *Apr. 30*, 942.
St. Margaret's Hope Naval Base—Site, Extent and Rental of, *Apr. 29*, 788.
West India Docks—Admiralty Stationery Store Staff—Promotion of Labourer of nine months service to charge of the Store, *May 6*, 1508.
Wireless Telegraphy—Annual Admiralty Expenditure on, *Apr. 28*, 647

Art and Science Buildings
Expenses, Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 40.

Asher, Mr. A. [Elgin Burghs]
Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill, *May 1*, 1134.

Ashton, Mr. T. G. [Bedfordshire, Luton]
Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1284.

Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H. [Fifeshire, E.]
- Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 482.
- Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 410.
- Somaliland Expedition — Action of the Italian Government—Method of checking the Mullah, *Apr. 30*, 1006.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. J.—*Attorney-General for Ireland* [Londonderry, N.]
- Civil Expenditure, Economies in, *Apr. 27*, 473.
- Constabulary at Railway Stations—Duties of, *Apr. 27*, 474.
- Dublin Motor Car Fatality—Withdrawal of proceedings against Marquess of Downshire, *Apr. 27*, 478.
- Dundrum Lunatic Asylum—Attendants' Hours — Tradesmen doing duty as Attendants, *Apr. 30*, 959; *May 1*, 1073.
- Education Result Fees, Equivalent grant in lieu of—Basis of Calculation, *Apr. 27*, 476.
- Galway
  - Harbour, Improvement of—Application for hire of dredger from Scotch Harbour Authority, *Apr. 27*, 477.
  - Housing Accommodation, Inadequacy of, *Apr. 30*, 960.
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1313.
  - Estates in English Court of Chancery, Provision for, in Bill—Case of Marquess of Ely's Estate, *Apr. 29*, 794.
  - Future Tenants, Inclusion of, in Clause 1, *Apr. 29*, 783.
  - Holdings, Number of, to which Bill applies, *Apr. 29*, 795.
  - References to sections of other Statutes —Printing and Circulation of, for convenience of Members, *Apr. 27*, 473.
  - Second Term Rents to be dealt with by Bill—Method of Calculation, *Apr. 29*, 795.
- Kildysert Petty Sessions — Removal of Press Reporter by Police Inspector from, *Apr. 27*, 476.
- Land Purchase—Proceedings for Default by Land Commissioners under Land Purchase Acts—Number of Cases—Amount drawn from Guarantee Fund in respect of Holdings sold, *Apr. 29*, 783.
- Magherafelt Disturbances.
  - Action of Police on occasion of, Full Investigation by Magistrates, *Apr. 27*, 474.
  - Treatment of Police by Mob, *Apr. 29*, 793.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. J.—*cont.*
- National School Teachers' Capitation Grant—Rate of Payment, *Apr. 27*, 476.
- Rate Collections, Date of—Inability of Board to vary dates fixed by Local Government Act of 1898, *Apr. 30*, 959.
- Thomastown School, Kilkenny, Lottery at —Policy of Executive in Ireland with regard to Lotteries held for charitable objects, *Apr. 28*, 647.
- Ulster Winter Sessions — Arrangements for Trial of Civil Business at, *May 6*, 1516.

Avoch Channel
- Lighting of, Arrangements for carrying out Scheme of Northern Lighthouse Commissioners.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 658.

Avoch (Ross-shire) Harbour
- Grant-in-Aid for Construction of Harbour.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Murray, *May 6*, 1515.

Avebury, Lord
- Shops (Early Closing) Bill, *Apr. 28*, 603.

Bagdad Railway
- Convention between Turkish Government and Concessionaires of the Anatolian Railway Company.
  - Article IV.—Reference to financial situation of England in.
    - *Q.* Sir J. Leese; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 213.
  - Date on which received by British Government.
    - *Qs.* Mr. G. Bowles; *As.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 29*, 790.
  - German Management of line from Konia to Persian Gulf under terms of.
    - *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 221.
- Communications from British Ambassador at Constantinople on subject of —Laying of Correspondence before the House.
  - *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 29*, 790.
- Company Promoters and H.M. Government—Nature of communication between, *May 5*, 1343.
- Constantinople Railway Scheme—Reports relative to.
  - *Q.* Sir E. Sassoon; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 480.
- Decree of Monharrem, Article VIII.—Terms of, Modification of necessary before application of surplus arising on increase of Customs duties, to purpose other than that of Turkish Debt.
  - *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 220.

[cont

Bagdad Railway—*cont.*

- Kilometric Grant — Communication of Anatolian Society with regard to means of securing grant, Effect of such measures.
  - *Qs.* Mr. G. Bowles; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 220.
- Participation of H M. Government in Scheme for Construction of the—Alleged renewal of proposals by Foreign Governments.
  - *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 29*, 796.
  - Opportunity for discussion, proposed. *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Sir A. Acland-Hood, *Apr. 22*, 114.
  - Scheme not a new one—Lord Palmerston's opinion of Railway Scheme. *O.* Marquess of Lansdowne, *May 5*, 1345.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill

- c. Ordered, *Apr. 29*, 777.
- 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 932.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.—*Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury* [Manchester, E.]

- Bagdad Railway.
  - Constantinople Railway Scheme, Reports Relative to, *Apr. 27*, 480.
  - Convention between Turkish Government and Concessionaires of the Anatolian Railway Company.
    - Article IV.—Reference to Financial Situation of England, *Apr. 23*, 213.
    - German Management of Line from Konia to Persian Gulf, *Apr. 23*, 221.
  - Decree of Monharrem, Article VIII. Terms of, Modification of, necessary before Application of Surplus arising on Increase of Custom Duties, to purpose other than that of Turkish Debt, *Apr. 23*, 220.
  - Kilometric Grant—Communication of Anatolian Society with regard to Means of Securing Grant—Effect of such Measures, *Apr. 23*, 220.
  - Participation of H.M. Government in Scheme—Alleged Renewal of Proposals of Foreign Governments, *Apr. 29*, 796.
- Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 577.
- Civil Service Estimates—Class 7, Vote 2, Discussion of, *Apr. 22*, 111.
- Corn Duty and Consumers' Burden, *Apr. 23*, 263, 264.
- Cunard Agreement—Parliamentary Sanction—Date of, *May 4*, 1203.
- Foreign Orders—Regulations with regard to Acceptance by British Officials—Case of British Ambassador at Rome, *May 6*, 1520.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.—*cont.*

- Hanbury, Mr., Death of, *Apr. 28*, 659.
- Historic Buildings—Proposed erection of building in modern style near Shakespeare's Birthplace, Establishment of National Trust for preservation of Historic Buildings impracticable, *May 6*, 1507.
- Holyrood Palace—Occupation and Sanitary condition of, *Apr. 21*, 16.
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1241.
- Law Officers of the Crown—Discussion of Conduct of in regard to Prosecution of Mr. Whitaker Wright, *May 4*, 1204.
- Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 417.
- London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 690.
  - Proposed Postponement of Second Reading impossible, *Apr. 23*, 226.
- Manchuria—Anglo-Russian Dispute with regard to proposed Reference of Dispute to the Hague Tribunal of Arbitral Jurisdiction, not advisable, *Apr. 30*, 961.
- Members of Parliament—Difficulties of obtaining Housing Accommodation at Westminster—Proposed Provision of Accommodation by Government impossible, *May 4*, 1203.
- Naval Expenditure, Curtailment of, Desire for General Agreement among the Powers—Official communication of, to Foreign Governments not desirable, *Apr. 28*, 658.
- Persia—Great Britain and Russia in Settlement of questions involving interests of both Powers, *Apr. 29*, 795.
- Roman Catholic University for Ireland—Establishment of under Ireland Development Grant—Full discussion promised for any subject of such interest and importance as that mentioned, *Apr. 23*, 225.
- Royal Commissions and Select Committees—Cost since year 1892, *Apr. 27*, 479.
- Scottish Land Laws—Expediency of introduction, *Apr. 28*, 659.
- Town Holdings Committee—Re-appointment of, *Apr. 29*, 796.
- Treasury Vote—Leave to report progress, *Apr. 21*, 103.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.—*President of Board of Trade* [Leeds, Central]

- Agricultural produce, Railway rates for, *Apr. 22*, 136.
- Aliens.
  - Bankrupt Aliens, Grant of Return relative to, not possible, *Apr. 30*, 954.
  - Immigrants rejected by United States and Canada now maintained at British expense, number of, *May 1*, 1073.

[*cont.*

Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.—*cont.*
Aultbea (Ross-shire) Pier, Construction of, Decision with regard to, *May 4*, 1183.
Avoch Channel, Lighting of, Scheme of Northern Lighthouse Commissioners, arrangements for carrying out, *Apr. 28*, 625.
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 505.
Brussels Sugar Convention, Bill to be introduced to effect alteration of Fiscal System of Great Britain in accordance with terms of, *May 4*, 1196.
Castlerea Railway Inquiry—Exclusion of Press Representative, *Apr. 30*, 960.
Harbours on Devon and Cornwall Coast, *Apr. 22*, 184, 185.
Irish Live Stock—Cross Channel Transit of—Regulations, *May 6*, 1513.
Limerick, Seamen landing at—Appointment of Board of Trade Official to look after interests of, *Apr. 27*, 478.
London and North Western Railway—Carriage arrangements for goods—Questionable practices with regard to, *Apr. 27*, 453; *Apr. 29*, 792.
London Underground Railway—System of electric traction, date of introduction, *Apr. 30*, 953.
Light Dues—Proposed reduction of, *Apr. 28*, 648.
Mosely Mission—Reports, arrangements for publication of, *May 4*, 1183.
"Princess Alexandra," Accident to—Officer in charge at time of accident, rank and certificate of, cost of repairs, etc., *Apr. 30*, 943.
Railways.
  Agricultural Produce, Rates for—Investigation of railway accidents—Defence of action of Board of Trade, etc., *Apr. 22*, 136, 166, 174.
  Preferential Railway Rates—Inter-Departmental Communications, *Apr. 27*, 466.
  Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1615.
Rock Angus Lighthouse, Repair of—Consideration of placing Light in Lighthouse, *Apr. 27*, 479.
Scottish Harbour Grants, Amount of, Sum allocated to Harbours in Crofting Counties, *Apr. 28*, 658.
Settle Limestone Quarry Company, Lock-out of Employees, Re-engagement refused until membership of Trade Union renounced, *Apr. 27*, 468.
Shipping.
  Employment of Wireless Telegraphy—Morgan Combine and Cunard Company, *Apr. 22*, 165.
  Extension of Legislation applicable to British Shipping trading to ports in United Kingdom to Foreign-owned Vessels, *Apr. 23*, 223.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.—*cont.*
South Africa, Development of British Trade in, *Apr. 22*, 169, 170, 176.
Trade Disputes, Board of Trade Intervention, Number of Instances of, *Apr. 27*, 467.
Wireless Telegraphy for British Light Vessels, Delay in Providing, *Apr. 28*, 657.
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 889.

Balfour of Burleigh, Lord—*Secretary for Scotland*
Land Registers (Scotland) Bill, *Apr. 30*, 918; *May 5*, 1328.

Banbury, Sir Frederick [Camberwell, Peckham]
Consols, Reduction in, *Apr. 23*, 280.
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill, *May 1*, 1133.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 749.

Bangor Corporation Bill
l. Com. Apr. 27*, 434.

Bankruptcy
Proceedings—Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure Presented, *Apr. 30*, 917, 936.

Barnstaple
Rural Postman, Dismissal of, on ground of ill-health—Grant of Pension or Compassionate gratuity proposed.
  Q. Mr. Soares; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 23*, 223.

Bath Corporation Water Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
  2R.* *Com.* May 5*, 1325.

Bayley, Mr. T. [Derbyshire, Chesterfield]
Post Office Employees, Committee to inquire into grievances of, *Apr. 30*, 1029.
Telegraph Conference, International Exchanges between Postal and Telegraph Staffs, discussion of subject of, during Conference, *Apr. 30*, 944.

Bedford, Duke of
Case of Colonel Kinloch, *May 4*, 1142.
Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 611.

Beer
Customs Duties on, Committee of Ways and Means, *May 6*, 1581.

Barry, Mr. E. [Cork Co., South]
Rosscarbery Mail Service—Establishment of second Daily Service, Institution of Enquiries with regard to, *Apr. 23*, 225.

Bartley, Sir G. [Islington, N.]
- Indian Railways, State Purchase of—Various precedents with regard to, Injurious effect resulting from uncertainty as to which precedent is to be followed — Appointment of Select Committee proposed, *Apr. 27*, 450.
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1233.
- London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 842.
- Roman Catholic University for Ireland—Possibility of Establishment of, under Ireland Development Grant without being brought before Parliament by a Bill, *Apr. 23*, 225.
- South African Loan, *May 6*, 1572.
- Taxation on Alcohol—Injustice of Income Tax Assessment—Corn Duty—Incidence of the Income Tax, *Apr. 23*, 283.

Belfast
- Fines in Factories—Case of Squire v. Messrs. McBride and Williams—Imposition of Fines disproportionate to Earnings—Possibility of Appeal, etc.
  - *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 28*, 656.
- Post Office Sorting Clerks—Increase of Wages, Delay in payment of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Sloan; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 27*, 478.

Bell, Mr. R. [Derby]
- Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 544.
- Fair Wages Resolution—Reading Printing Works and Scale of Wages, *Apr. 21*, 69.
- Railway Employees, Hours of—Accidents among Railway Workers—Necessity for Inspection, *Apr. 22*, 121; *May 6*, 1597.
- Trafalgar Square, Railway Site in, *Apr. 21*, 33.

Belper, Lord
- Motor Cars, Regulation of, *Apr. 30*, 928.

Berwickshire County Town Bill
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 443.
  - 2R.* *May 4*, 1142.
  - Rep.* *May 5*, 1327.

Bethesda Quarry Dispute
- Board of Trade, Powers of, *Apr. 27*, 486, 499, 506, 519, 520, 531, 534, 536, 553, 557, 570, 571, 579.
- Conciliation Act—Operation of, *Apr. 27*, 488, 498, 506, 519, 558, 574, 579.
- Nonconformist Chapels—Leases of, *Apr. 27*, 501.
- Penrhyn, Lord—Attitude of, *Apr. 27*, 484, 486, 487, 499, 507, 518, 520, 529, 534, 540, 549, 552, 559, 564, 567, 571, 580, 584.
- Quarrymen—Attitude of, *Apr. 27*, 491, 499, 514, 518, 521, 530, 531, 535, 537, 542, 547, 550, 562, 564, 571, 583, 584.
- Vote of Censure, *Apr. 27*, 482.

Betting Bill
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 640.

Bhownaggree, Sir M. [Bethnal Green, N.E.]
- British Indian Subjects in Transvaal, Treatment of—Cases of alleged Injustice, *Apr. 29*, 784.
- Indian Technical and Industrial Schools, *Apr. 27*, 464.

Bignold, Mr. A. [Wick Burghs]
- Trawling, Illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish Fisheries, *Apr. 22*, 196.

Bill, Mr. C. [Staffordshire, Leek]
- Meat Contracts for the Army—Delay in sending Terms for Contracts to Australia and New Zealand—Greater Expedition proposed, *Apr. 30*, 948.
- South African War Trophies—Allocation of, Consideration of request of New Zealand with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 948.

Birdcage Walk
- Condition of Roadway, *Apr. 21*, 33.

Birmingham District Tramways Bill
- *l.* 2R.* *Apr. 28*, 593.
  - *Com.* *May. 5*, 1325.

Births, Marriages and Deaths
- England and Wales—General Abstract for 1902, Presented *Apr. 30*, 915, 935.

Bishopric of Bristol Bill
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 931.
  - *c.* 2R. *May 5*, 1329.

Black, Mr. A. W. [Banffshire]
- Holyrood Palace, Occupation and Sanitary Condition of, *Apr. 21*, 15.
- St. Margaret's Hope Naval Base—Site, extent and rental of, *Apr. 29*, 788.
- Trawling, illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish Fisheries—Suggested Increase of Penalties, *Apr. 22*, 192.

Bloemfontein Conference
- *see* South African Loan

Blythswood, Lord
- Case of Colonel Kinloch, *May 4*, 1177.

Board of Trade
- *see* Trade, Board of.

Boers
- South African Loan—*Debate* [H.C.] *May 6*, 1522.

Borough Funds Bill
- *c. con.* *Apr. 30*, 1064.
  - *l.* 3R. *May 4*, 1324.
  - 1R.* *May 5*, 1328.
- Ireland, Extension to, proposed, *May 4*, 1324.

Boscawen, Capt. Griffith [Kent, Tunbridge]
- Bishops Froome Charity—Refusal of Trustees to render Annual Accounts to Parish Council, *May 4*, 1200.

[*cont.*

Boscawen, Capt. Griffith—*cont.*
- Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 389.
- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1115.
- Post Office Reforms—Reasons in favour of an outside Committee of Inquiry into Grievances of Employees—Plea for Improvement in Parcel Post Service, *Apr. 30*, 1049.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill
- *l. Com.* May 4*, 1138.

Bowles, Mr. T. Gibson [Lynn Regis]
- Bagdad Railway.
  - Convention between Turkish Government and Concessionaires of the Anatolian Railway Company.
    - Date on which received by British Government, *Apr. 29*, 790.
    - German Management of Line from Konia to Persian Gulf, *Apr. 23*, 221.
  - Communications from British Ambassador at Constantinople on subject of — Laying of Correspondence before the House, *Apr. 29*, 790.
  - Decree of Monharrem, Article VIII—Terms of, Modification of necessary before application of surplus arising on increase of Customs duties to purpose other than that of Turkish debt, *Apr. 23*, 220.
  - Kilometric Grant — Communication of Anatolian Society with regard to means of securing Grant—Effect of such measures, *Apr. 23*, 220.
  - Participation of H.M. Government in scheme for construction of —Alleged renewals of proposals of Foreign Governments, *Apr. 29*, 796.
    - Opportunity for discussion proposed, *Apr. 22*, 114.
- Brussels Sugar Convention—Alteration of Fiscal System of Great Britain in accordance with terms of—Nature of measures to be adopted, date of introduction, *May 4*, 1196.
- Collision between "Bulwark" and "Formidable"—Alleged prohibition of account of incident being sent home, *Apr. 30*, 949.
- Diplomatic and Consular Buildings—Cemeteries of British Soldiers in Ionian Islands, *Apr. 21*, 40.
- Foreign Orders—Regulations with regard to acceptance by British Officials—Case of British Ambassador at Rome, *May 6*, 1520.
- Hampton Court Palace, Vandalism at—*Apr. 21*, 21.

Bowles, Mr. T. Gibson—*cont.*
- Holyrood Palace—Occupation and Sanitary condition of, *Apr. 21*, 15, 16.
- House of Commons—Smoking Accommodation in, *Apr. 21*, 39.
- Hyde Park, Condition of the Ride in—*May 6*, 1592.
- Lighthouses Communication between shore and—Use of Wireless Telegraphy—Sale of English shipping to foreigners—Use of British flag by foreign shipowners, *Apr. 22*, 155.
- Manchuria—Anglo-Russian Dispute with regard to—Reference of dispute to the Hague Tribunal of Arbitral Jurisdiction, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 961.
- Naval gunnery—Defective gunnery due to inadequate supply of practice ammunition and inadequate interest taken in gunnery by admirals, etc., alleged — Scheme for improvement, *Apr. 23*, 213.
- New South Wales and the Sugar Rebate —Protest against—Inquiries following protest not yet completed, *Apr. 21*, 9.
- Osborne House, Expenditure on—*Apr. 21*, 26 ; *May 6*, 1590.
- Persia, Great Britain and Russia in—Satisfactory settlement of questions involving interests of both Powers, *Apr. 29*, 795.
- Shipping — Morgan Combine, *Apr. 22*, 164.
- Somaliland Expedition—Action of Foreign Office, *Apr. 30*, 979.
- South African Loan, *May 6*, 1557.
- Taxation — Strengthening of the Sinking Fund—Revenue for Crown Lands—Abuses connected with Income Tax —Reasons in favour of Repeal of Corn Duty—Increase of Fixed Charge of National Debt, *Apr. 23*, 290.
- Venezuela, Arbitration, State of Negotiations with regard to Proposal for, etc., *Apr. 21*, 7.
- West Indian Sugar Industry—Bill introduced into Jamaica Legislative Council empowering Guarantee out of Colonial Revenues of Interest on Capital employed in establishing Sugar Factories—Progress under Bill, *Apr. 21*, 8.

Bridgwater Gas Bill
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
  - 2R.* *Com.* May 5*, 1325.

Brigg, Mr. [Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley]
- Delivery of Letters to Members—Position of Smoking Room, *Apr. 21*, 37.
- Fair Wages Resolution—Reading Printing Works and Scale of Wages, *Apr. 21*, 69.
- Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 387.
- National Scientific Research, *Apr. 21*, 56.
- Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 891.

Bristol Corporation Bill
  l. Com. Apr. 27*, 434.
Bright Statue
  Position of.
    Os. Apr. 21, 35.
Brighton
  Post Office—Promotion of Beckenham Woman Telegraphist to Charge of Branch Office.
    Q. Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 4*, 1183.
Broadhurst, Mr. H. [Leicester]
  City of London Artillery Volunteers—Guns, Uselessness of, Allotted to Volunteers—Speedy Equipment of Guns Recently Supplied to Regiment, *May 4*, 1192.
  Members of Parliament—Housing Accommodation at Westminster, Difficulties of Obtaining—Provision of Accommodation by Government proposed, *May 4*, 1203.
  Post Office Reforms—Leave of Absence for Officials—Complaints regarding Sanitation—Reasons in Favour of the Appointment of an Outside Committee, *Apr. 30*, 1047.
  South Africa, British Trade in—Shipping Rates, *Apr. 22*, 176.
Broadstairs Gas Bill
  c. 3R.* *Apr. 21*, 1.
  l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
    2R.* *Com.* May 5*, 1325.

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John—*Secretary of State for War* [Surrey, Guildford]
  Army Order No. 9, Limitations of, Proposed Extension, *Apr. 27*, 456.
  Army Returns, Respecting Volunteers, Royal Garrison Regiments, Army Reserve and Military Works, Grant of, *Apr. 28*, 650.
  Discharged Soldiers, Employment of—Alleged Increase of Beggars in Holland Division of Lincolnshire due to Discharged Soldiers out of work—Provision of Employment for such cases, *Apr. 28*, 653.
  Dundalk Rifle Range—Employment of, by Military Authorities, *Apr. 22*, 111.
  Fair Wages Resolution—Alleged Violation of by Messrs. Vickers, Son, and Maxim, at Brightside Works, *May 4*, 1188.
  Guns.
    Pattern of 15-Pounder Gun dissimilar to 1885 Gun, Shooting Capacities of 1885, 1889, and Ehrherdt Guns respectively, *Apr. 28*, 650.
    Rate of Firing of Guns of 1885, 1899 Patterns, and Ehrherdt Quick-firing Field Gun respectively, *Apr. 30*, 949.
  Imperial Yeomanry, Pay, Arrears of—Case of late Captain McKenzie, Norfolk Regiment, *Apr. 28*, 653.

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John—*cont.*
  Louth Militia—Training of—Home Training proposed, *Apr. 22*, 111.
  Meat Contracts for the Army—Delay in sending terms for Contracts to Australia and New Zealand, *Apr. 30*, 948.
  Military Courts-Martial—Number submitted to Judge Advocate-General's Office, Number quashed, etc., for years 1900, 1901, 1902, *May 6*, 1505.
  Militia Officers—Recognition of Services during South African War, *Apr. 29*, 783; *May 6*, 1505.
  Pretoria Military Riot—Five men sentenced to death for participation in, information with regard to, men outside jurisdiction of War Office, *Apr. 23*, 217.
  Rough Riders and Scouts—Enlistment of men under Army height regulation as Rough Riders and for Scouting purposes, *Apr. 30*, 947.
  Royal Garrison Regiment, Return—Inclusion of Battalions Stationed at Malta. *Apr. 29*, 784.
  Seaforth Highlanders—1st Volunteer Battalion, Discharges, withholding of, from men joining Lovat Scouts, alleged—Inquiry proposed, *Apr. 22*, 111.
  Seventh Hussars—Inadequate number of, at Hampton Court and Hounslow—Relief of by employment of Household Cavalry, *Apr. 29*, 787.
  Soldiers in County Asylums—Case of Private Bowers, *May 4*, 1189.
  Somaliland Expedition.
    Answers to criticisms and objections—Size and strength of forces—Bullet in use by troops—Action of Italian Government, *Apr. 30*, 999.
    Disaster, details of, *Apr. 25*, 215.
    Mullah's supply of Munitions, channel through which obtained, *Apr. 29*, 788.
    Wireless Telegraphy—Employment of Marine instruments alleged—Substitution of, for apparatus adopted to overland use—Employment of experts, *Apr. 30*, 947.
  South African War.
    Officers and Men of Regular Forces, Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers and Irregular Forces serving in—Numbers of—Rewards and promotions, *May 6*, 1506.
    Prisoners undergoing sentences for Offences arising out of War, Liberation of, *Apr. 29*, 780.
    Trophies, Allocation of—Consideration of request of New Zealand with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 948.
  Transvaal, War Stores in, Destruction of, *Apr. 29*, 787.
  Volunteer Sergeant Instructors, Payment of—Modification of Army Order with regard to, *May 5*, 1368.

Brown, Mr. G. M. [Edinburgh, Central]
Civil Service Examinations — Successful Candidates in 1902, Number of, offering Shorthand as examination subject, *May 5*, 1365.

Bryce, Rt. Hon. James [Aberdeen, South]
Clifford's Inn, Sale of—Laying of statement on Subject of, before the House, Opportunity for discussion of scheme of legal education, *Apr. 30*, 957.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 808.
Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1623.
Somaliland Expedition—Importance of a strictly defensive position with regard to the Mullah—Action of the Italian Government—Attitude of Abyssinia—Importance of encouraging trade—Financial aspect of the question, *Apr. 30*, 993.
South Africa—British trade in—Shipping rates — Dissension between Departments, *Apr. 22*, 174.
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 888.

Buchanan, Mr. T. R. [Perthshire, E.]
County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill, *Apr. 21*, 103.
Exchequer Bonds—Payment or renewal of Bonds repayable in present year, *May 4*, 1186.
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1560.
Transvaal and Orange River Colonies—Expenditure on Non-Military purposes, *Apr. 29*, 780.

Budget
Discussion, Opportunities for.
Q. Apr. 23, 338, 351, 352.
Resolutions—Order of Consideration—*Debate in Com. of Ways and Means, May 6*, 1581.
Statement (Rt. Hon. C. T. Ritchie), *Apr. 23*, 228.
Amount of Proposed Sinking Fund, 246.
Balance Sheet, 1902-3, 238.
Burden of Taxation, 237.
Civil Expenditure, 250.
Condition of Trade, 230.
Consols and Foreign Government Stocks, 242.
Cost of the War, 234.
Disposal of Surplus, 252.
Estimated Revenue, 1903-4, 251.
Expenditure, 1902-3, 233.
Expenditure, 1903-4.
Fall in Consols, 240.
Final Balance Sheet, 1903-4, 257.
Financial Out-turn, 1902-3, 232.
Fixed Debt Charge, 244.
Indirect Taxation—Remission of, 255.
Money Market—Condition of, 231.

Budget—*cont.*
National Debt—Review of, 238.
Naval and Military Expenditure, 247.
Necessity of Reducing Income Tax, 253.
Proposed Inquiry into Income Tax, 254.
Reduction of Armaments, 249.
Reduction of 4d. in Income Tax, 255.
Repeal of Corn Duty, 256.
Revenue, 1902-3, 235.
State of the Money Market, 231.
Total Expenditure, 1903-4, 247.
War Expenditure, 234.
for details of subjects discussed *see* titles Tea, Income Tax.

"Bulwark"
Collision between "Bulwark" and "Formidable," Extent of damage, Alleged prohibition of account of incident being sent home.
Qs. Sir W. Allan, Mr. G. Bowles; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 30*, 949.

Burdett-Coutts, Mr. A. B. [Westminster]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 799.

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill
c. 3R.* *Apr. 21*, 1.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill
c. 2R. *May 1*, 1134.
2R.* *May 6*, 1628.

Burns, Mr. John [Battersea]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 568.
Hampton Court Palace, Vandalism at, *Apr. 21*, 21.
Post Office Employees, Treatment of—Duties and Responsibility of the Postmaster-General — Objection to suggested Committee of Inquiry — Wages of auxiliary postmen—Question of sanitation, *Apr. 30*, 1037.
Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1586.
Railway Accidents—Suggested measures for the prevention of, *Apr. 22*, 143.
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 898.

Burt, Mr. T. [Morpeth]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute) *Apr. 27*, 517.
Northumberland Rural Postmen, Wages of — Non-payment of higher wage introduced by Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, Payment of arrears proposed, *May 6*, 1514.

Bury
Magistracy, Representation of Political Parties in—Present disproportion of parties — Further appointments to remedy inequality, proposed.
Q. Mr. Toulmin ; *A.* Sir W. Walrond, *May 4*, 1199.

Business of the House
Course of Business.
Balfour's, Mr. A. J., Statements and Replies to Questions, *Apr. 27*, 480 ; *Apr. 29*, 797 ; *May 4*, 1204 ; *May 5*, 1375 ; *May 6*, 1520.
Foreign Office Vote, taking of, to allow of discussion of affairs in Somaliland, *Apr. 27*, 481.

Butcher, Mr. J. G. [York]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 358.

Buxton, Mr. Sydney [Tower Hamlets, Poplar]
Budget Resolutions, Order of taking—*May 6*, 1582.
Expenditure in 1902-1903, Extra expenditure on account of the War — Ordinary expenditure, *May 4*, 1185.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 663.
National Debt—Fixed Charge, amount of, applied to cost of management, interest on debt, and Sinking Fund, respectively, for 1902-1903, *May 5*, 1366.
Taxation—Sinking Fund, Suspension of—Burden of Indirect Taxpayers, *Apr. 23*, 235.
Transvaal, Compensation — Payment of Claims—From what Funds to be Drawn, *May 4*, 1185.
Transvaal Loan — Items included in £4,000,000 to be Repaid by Transvaal out of Loan, *May 4*, 1185.
War Expenditure—Government Method of Dealing with, *Apr. 23*, 298.

Caldwell, Mr. James [Lanark, Mid.]
Holyrood Palace—Occupation and Sanitary Condition of, *Apr. 21*, 18.
Osborne House, Expenditure on—Naval and Military Uses, *Apr. 21*, 27.
Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1593.

Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H. [Stirling Burghs]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 571.
Budget — Resolutions, Opportunity for Discussion of, *Apr. 23*, 351.
Hanbury, Mr., Death of, Expressions of Regret, *Apr. 28*, 659.
Holyrood Palace—Occupation and Sanitary Condition of, *Apr. 21*, 14, 17 18.
Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1255.

Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H.—*cont.*
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 420.
Naval and Military Expenditure—Reduction of, *Apr. 23*, 344.
South African Loan and War Contribution (Guarantee), *May 6*, 1551.
Somaliland Disaster—Details of, *Apr. 25*, 215.

Canada.
Destitute English Immigrants—Case of men emigrating on promise of work by Dominion Iron and Steel Company—Non-employment on arrival—Arrangements for return of immigrants.
Q. Mr. Crooks ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 4*, 1190.
St. Louis Exhibition—Action of Board of Trade with regard to,
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 164.

Canterbury, Archbishop of
Bishopric of Bristol Bill, *May 5*, 1329.

Cardiff Railway Bill
l Com. Apr. 30*, 913.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill
l. Com. May 5*, 1326.

Cattle and Live Stock
Argentina, Introduction of Cattle from.
Observations in Com., *April 21*, 43, 59.
Cross Channel Transit of Irish Live Stock.
Regulations, Number of prosecutions for violation of—Survey of vessels, complaints with regard to, etc.
Q. Mr. Joyce ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *May 6*, 1513.
Glanders, Notification of.
Observations in Com., *April 21*, 49.
Stallions, Inspection of.
Observations in Com., *April 21*, 50, 64.
Swine Fever, Suppression of.
Observations in Com., *April 21*, 48, 58, 62.

Causton, Mr. R. K. [Southwark, W.]
London County Council Vehicular Byelaw — Uncertainty with regard to class of vehicles to which law would apply, etc.—Deputation of carrying agents proposed, *Apr. 27*, 471.

Cawley, Mr. F. [Lancashire, Prestwich]
South Africa, British trade in—American competition in Shipping Rates, *Apr. 22*, 171.
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1569.

Cecil, Mr. Evelyn [Aston Manor]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 734.

Cecil, Lord Hugh [Greenwich]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1077.
Stationery and Printing—Verbatim reports of speeches undesirable, *Apr. 21*, 94.

Cemeteries of British Soldiers in Ionian Islands
- *see* Ionian Islands.

Central African Railway
- *see* South African Loan.

Ceylon
- Tea Estates, Employment of Children on—Age at which employed.
  - *Q.* Mr. Schwann; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 4*, 1190.

Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means
- Hon. J. W. Lowther.

Chamberlain, Right Hon. Austen—*Postmaster-General* [Worcestershire, E.]
- Ireland.
  - Mail Service.
    - Mountmellick—Delay in Delivery of Mails, *Apr. 30*, 961.
    - Rosscarbery — Establishment of Second Daily Service, Institution of Inquiries with regard to, *Apr. 23*, 225.
  - Post Office Employees.
    - Belfast Sorting Clerks—Increase of Wages, Delay in payment of, *Apr. 27*, 478.
    - Cork Outdoor Postmen—Revision of Duties of, *May 6*, 1504.
- Post Office.
  - Electric Generating Station, Proposed provision of—Purposes for which required—Offer of Companies to supply Current, *Apr. 29*, 781.
  - Employees.
    - Barnstaple Rural Postman, Dismissal of on Ground of Ill-health—Grant of Pension or Compassionate Allowance, *Apr. 23*, 223.
    - Brighton—Promotion of Beckenham Woman Telegraphist to charge of Branch Office, Reasons for, *May 4*, 1184.
    - Northumberland Rural Postmen—Wages of, *May 6*, 1514.
    - Sorters in charge of Travelling Post Offices — Improvement in position of, Decision with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 944.
    - Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists—Promotions, Return, bringing up to date of, *Apr. 27*, 452.
  - Ilford Sorting Office—Sanitary Accommodation, Inadequacy of—Inquiry into Sanitary Condition of Office, *Apr. 24*, 358.
  - Postage Rates to Canada—Periodicals sent from Canada at lower rates than from Great Britain and Ireland—Reduction of Rates, *Apr. 30*, 955.

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Austen—*cont.*
  - Registered Postal Packets—Compensation for lost packets, Payment of — Number and Amount of Claims for Registered Parcels lost, etc., *May 4*, 1183.
  - Savings Bank Department—Employment of Telegraph Apparatus, subsequent to decision regarding employment of Telephone Service, *Apr. 23*, 211.
  - Telegraph Service.
    - Conference — International Exchanges between Members of Postal and Telegraph Staffs Discussion of subject of, during Conference, *Apr. 30*, 944.
    - Edge Hill Station (L. and N.W. Railway), Telegraphic Facilities, proposed establishment of, *May 5*, 1367.
    - Telegrams to London—Omission of word London, if postal district is given—Transmission of telegrams so addressed, instructions to telegraph offices on subject of, *May 5*, 1367.
  - Vote for Expenses—Statement of Expenditure, Reforms, &c.—Increase in denominations of Postal Orders — Reform to benefit Friendly Societies—Institution of Second Post in rural districts—Receipt on Payment for Telegrams—Sending of Re-directed Telegrams by Post—Grievances of the Post Office Staff—Institution of Committee of Inquiry, *Apr. 30*, 1015.

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J.,—*Secretary of State for the Colonies* [Birmingham, W.]
- Alaskan Boundary Dispute, Commission Jurists on—Canadian Government objection to selection of, made by United States, *Apr. 30*, 951.
- Canada, Destitute English Immigrants in—Case of, Men Emigrating on Promise of Work by Dominion Iron and Steel Company, *May 4*, 1190.
- Ceylon Tea Estates, Employment of Children on—Age at which employed, *May 4*, 1190.
- Fiji.
  - Forced Labour on the Roads, *May 5*, 1369.
  - Native Petition to the King—Permission for, presentation of, *May 5*, 1370.
  - Native Regulations, Steps to obtain upon Report from New Zealand *May 5*, 1369.
  - Poll Tax, Alleged Imposition of, *May 5*, 1369.
  - Suva Bubonic Plague Hospital, Protest against Establishment of, Reply in Answer to, *May 5*, 1370.
  - Fijian Chiefs—Deportation of without Trial, *May 5*, 1370.

[*cont.*

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J.—*cont.*
- Licensing Law—(Compensation for Non-Renewal Bill), *Apr. 24*, 425.
- Macdonald, late Sir Hector—Inspection and Review at Ceylon Coronation Parade entrusted to—Action of Governor. General of Ceylon independent of Colonial Office, *Apr. 28*, 654.
- New South Wales—Protest against Bearing Cost of Sugar Rebate—Inquiries not yet Completed, *Apr. 21*, 9.
- Nigeria, Reports on—Expediting of Publication, *Apr. 22*, 111.
- Northern Nigeria—Railway Construction in, *Apr. 23*, 219.
- Pacific Cable, Date of Opening—Interruptions of Service, Number of, *Apr. 30*, 947.
- Pretoria, Condemned Soldiers of Leinster Regiment at—Commutation of Death Sentence, *Apr. 27*, 456.
- Roache, J.—Case of, Appeal for Commutation of Sentence, *Apr. 29*, 783.
- South African Loan and War Contribution (Guarantee), *May 6*, 1522.
- South African Transport—Tenders for Carriage of Government Stores, *Apr. 24*, 358.
- Sugar Exports from Mauritius to Australia, decrease of — Australian Sugar duty, *Apr. 29*, 784.
- Transvaal.
  - Agricultural Resources — Colonel Thomas's Report, *May 5*, 1368.
  - British Indian Subjects in Transvaal, Treatment of—Cases of alleged injustice — Report and inquiry into cases, *Apr. 29*, 784.
  - Employment of Foreigners by Government — Preference given to Foreigners, *May 6*, 1506.
  - Mines.
    - Law regulating ventilation of mines and protection of workmen, Administration of — *May 6*, 1510.
    - Native Labour in mines—Record of sickness and mortality among labourers, Keeping of —*Apr. 30*, 950.
- Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, Censorship of—Letters and Telegrams. *Apr. 29*, 786.
- Trinidad.
  - Port of Spain Waterworks Bill—Submission of, to Secretary of State for the Colonies previous to introduction, *May 6*, 1510.
  - Riots—Number of Deaths resulting from—Value of public property destroyed, *May 6*, 1510.
- West Indian Sugar Industry Bill introduced into Jamaica Legislative Council, empowering guarantee out of Colonial revenues of interest on capital employed in establishing sugar factories—Progress under Bill, *Apr. 21*, 8.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H. Walrond.

Chancellor of the Exchequer
Rt. Hon. C. T. Ritchie.

Channing, Mr. F. A. [Northamptonshire, E.]
- Agriculture—Decrease in Diseases of Cattle—Depopulation of Rural Districts—Danish Enterprise in Agriculture, *Apr. 21*, 53.
- Consols, Fall in—Effect on Savings Banks—Exemptions and Abatements Extended to Poor Income Taxpayers—Repeal of Corn Tax, *Apr. 23*, 312.
- Irish Land Bill—Future Tenants, inclusion of, in Benefits of Bill, *Apr. 29*, 783.
- Irish Land Purchase—Proceedings for Default by Land Commissioners under Land Purchase Act—Number of Cases—Amount Drawn from Guarantee Fund in Respect of Holdings Sold, *Apr. 29*, 783.
- London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 751.
- Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1585.
- Railways—Accidents, Necessity for Investigation of—Responsibility of the Board of Trade—Railway Hours of Work—Rates for Agricultural Produce, *Apr. 22*, 133.
- Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1613.
- Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, Censorship of Letters and Telegrams, *Apr. 29*, 786.

Chaplin, Rt. Hon. H. [Lincolnshire, Sleaford]
- Budget Resolutions, Order of taking, *May 6*, 1581.
- Hanbury, Mr., Death of, Expressions of regret, *Apr. 28*, 659.
- Railways.
  - Accidents, Prevention of, *Apr. 22*, 150.
  - Rates and Charges — Preferential Railway Rates — Inter-departmental Communications, *Apr. 27*, 466.
- Taxation—Futility of the repeal of the Corn Duty—Reasons for reduction of Tea Duty, *Apr. 23*, 275.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill
- *c. Con.* Apr. 24*, 353.
- 3R.* *Apr. 28*, 640.
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Charity and Charity Commissioners
- Bishops Froome Charity — Refusal of Trustees to render Annual Account to Parish Council.
  - *Q.* Mr. Edwards; *A.* Mr. G. Boscawen, *May 4*, 1200.
- Burghclere (Hants) Charity—Correspondence between Trustees of Poor Allotment and Charity Commission in respect of proposed Sale of Land—Return Ordered, *Apr. 28*, 646.
- Report of Commissioners Presented, *Apr. 27*, 436.

China
- Manchuria.
  - Anglo-Russian Dispute with regard to—Reference of Dispute to the Hague Tribunal of Arbitral Jurisdiction.
    - *Q.* Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 30*, 961.
  - Evacuation of.
    - Manchuria Convention—Failure on part of Russian Government to observe provisions of,
      - *Q.* Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 30*, 952.
    - Mining Experts—Attempt of Russian Government to secure the employment of Russians only.
      - *Q.* Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 30*, 953.
    - Russian demand for dismissal of British doctor from position of Health Officer at Niu-Chwang in favour of a Russian doctor.
      - *Q.* Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 30*, 952.
    - Statement of Russian Ambassador, *May 1*, 1067, 1135.
  - Russian Demands.
    - Action of British Government with regard to.
      - *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 29*, 789.
    - Statement in the House with regard to.
      - *Q.* Mr. Norman; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 29*, 789.
  - Russian Negotiations—Reported communications between Russian and Chinese Governments on subject of evacuation of part of Manchuria.
    - *Qs.* Earl Spencer; *As.* Marquess of Lansdowne, *Apr. 28*, 639; *Apr. 30*, 917.
- Niu-Chwang Revenues—Retention of by Russian Government—Result of representations with regard to restoration of.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 30*, 952.
- Opium Tax—Imposition of additional opium tax by Government of the province of Canton—Discontinuance of, owing to protests of British Consul.
  - *Q.* Mr. H. Wilson; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 5*, 1365.
- Wars in—Cost and Expenditure.
  - Return Ordered, *Apr. 27*, 449.
  - Return Presented, *Apr. 28*, 779.

Churchill, Mr. Winston [Oldham]
- Army Corps—First, Second, Third and Fourth Army Corps—Effective Strength and Composition—Grant of Return Relative to—Form of Return—Date of Issue, *Apr. 27*, 458; *May 4*, 1192.
- Army Returns—Grant of, respecting Volunteers, Royal Garrison Regiments, Army Reserve and Military Works, *Apr. 28*, 650.
- Indian Customs Tariff—Duties imposed on Military Band instruments of 1st Seaforth Highlanders—Ground for imposition, *May 4*, 1195.
- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1109.
- Royal Field Artillery, 65th Battery, Strength of—Non-inclusion in units of 1st Army Corps, *May* 4, 1191.

City and North East Suburban Electric Railway Bill
- *c.* Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 933.

City and South London Railway Bill
- *c. con.** *Apr. 24*, 354.
  - 3R.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
- *l.* 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Civil Expenditure
- Budget—Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 250.

Civil Service
- Appointment without certificate—Treasury Minute, Presented, *Apr. 27*, 443.
- Examination—Successful candidates in 1902, Number of, offering Shorthand as examination subject.
  - *Q.* Mr. G. Brown; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *May 5*, 1365.
- Pensions—Writers' Pensions—Terms of Engagement of Writers registered in 1870 and 1871.
  - *Q.* Mr. C. Hay; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 30*, 945.
- Retired Allowance of Rural Postman granted, *Apr. 27*, 443.
- Supplementary Estimate Presented, *Apr. 27*, 449.

Civil Service and Revenue Departments Estimates
- *see* Supply.

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill
- *c.* 1R.* *May 4*, 1180.
- *l.* Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 433.
  - 3R.*, *May 1*, 1066.

Clifford's Inn, Sale of
- Amount of Proceeds of applicable to purposes of Legal Education—Value of Clifford's Inn, Number of Members, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. W. R. Peel; *A.* Sir R. Finlay, *Apr. 30*, 958.

[*cont.*

Clifford's Inn, Sale of—*cont.*
- Assent of Attorney-General to, Reasons for—Alternative Scheme.
  - *Q.* Mr. Rea; *A.* Sir R. Finlay, *Apr. 30*, 957.
- Laying of Statement on Subject of before the House—Opportunity for Discussion of Scheme of Legal Education.
  - *Q.* Mr. Bryce; *A.* Sir R. Finlay, *Apr. 30*, 957.

Coal
- Export Duty — Incorrect Declarations, Loss to Revenue arising from.
  - *Q.* Mr. D. A. Thomas; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 27*, 453.
- Exports—Return Presented, *Apr. 21*, 6.
- Tax—Debate on Budget Statement, *Apr. 23*, 288, 309, 320, 328, 346.

Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.—*Under Secretary to the Home Office* [Ayrshire, N.]
- Belfast Factories, Fines in—Case of Squire *v.* Messrs. McBride and Williams—Imposition of fines disproportionate to earnings—Possibility of appeal, *Apr. 28*, 656.
- London County Council Vehicular By-Law—Uncertainty with regard to class of vehicles to which law would apply, etc.—Deputation of carrying agents, *Apr. 27*, 471.
- Motor Cars—Speed Regulations—Proceedings against omnibus driver for driving at excess speed—Instructions to police to take similar measures against motor car drivers, *Apr. 27*, 470.
- Weymouth Licensing Sessions — Non-admission of women and children to public-houses for purposes of making Slate Club payments a condition of renewing licences, *Apr. 27*. 470.
- Worcestershire Licensing Committee — Decision of, with regard to Upton-on-Severn and Shipston-on-Stour—Reinstatement of towns, *Apr. 30*, 954.
- Workmen's Compensation Act—Medical referees assisting County Court Judges—Number of Cases, *Apr. 22*, 112.

Coghill, Mr. D. H. [Stoke-upon-Trent]
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1224.

Cohen, Mr. B. [Islington, E.]
- Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1124.
- Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1586.
- South African Loan, *May 6*, 1562.

Colomb, Sir John [Great Yarmouth]
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1291.
- Irish Land Purchase—Default of Payment—Amount from Grants-in-Aid of Local Taxation on Account of, per year—Repayment to Guarantee Fund, *Apr. 28*, 649.
- Pacific Cable, Date of Opening—Interruptions of Service, Number of, *Apr. 30*, 947.

Colonial Office
- *Secretary of State*—Rt. Hon. J. Chamberlain.
- *Parliamentary Secretary*—Earl of Onslow.

Colonies
- Annual Reports Presented, *May 5*, 1327, 1363.

Commander-in-Chief, Position of
- *see* Kinloch, Colonel—Case of.

Commercial Gas Bill
- *c.* Rep.* *May 1*, 1068.

Commission of Woods and Forests
- Crown Lands in Wales, Action with regard to—*Apr. 29*, 900, 909, 911.

Commons (Inclosure Awards)
- Return Ordered, *Apr. 23*, 352.

Companies
- Winding-up of under Act of 1890—Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure Presented, *Apr. 30*, 916, 935.

Congested Districts
- *see* Irish Land Bill.

Congo Free State
- British Consols—Consideration of additional appointments.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 4*, 1196.
- Reports on condition of, Presentation of, previous to Debate on the Congo State, proposed—Inquiries as to observance of terms of Berlin Conference.
  - *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 4*, 1196.

Consols
- Fall in Interest—Effect on Savings Banks, Budget Statement, *Apr. 23*, 240, 280, 311, 312, 344.

Constabulary, Royal Irish
- Official Papers, destruction of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Sloan, Mr. T. W. Russell; *As.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1203.
  - *Q.* Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1372.
- Police at Railway Stations—Proposed discontinuance of daily attendance.
  - *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 474.
- Recruiting, Cessation of—Applicants for admission, number of Periods over which applications extended, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1372.

Contracts (India Office) Bill
- *l.* 1. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 444.

Convicts
- Convicts called as witnesses. Allowance of Improved Fare while attending Courts of Law.
  - *Q.* Mr. Guthrie; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas *May 4*, 1187.

Corbett, Mr. A. C. [Glasgow, Tradeston]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 382.

Corbett, Mr. T. L. [Down, North]
Rock Angus Lighthouse, Repair of—Expediency of placing light in lighthouse, *Apr. 27*, 479.

Cork
Outdoor Postmen—Revision of duties of, *Q.* Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1504.

Corn Duty
Budget Proposal in respect to Remission of duty—Goods to which proposal applies. *Q.* Sir H. Vincent ; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 27*, 454.
Customs Department Employees—Number by which increased since introduction of Corn Tax. *Q.* Mr. Lough ; *A.* Mr. Elliot, *Apr. 22*, 112.
Refund of duty upon stocks of imported grain, when duty already paid. *Q.* Mr. Delany ; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 5*, 1371.
Repeal of—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 256, 263, 264, 276, 284, 286, 294, 296, 304, 310, 314, 319, 321, 325, 328, 335, 339, 345.
Yield for year 1902-1903, Statistics. *Q.* Sir H. Vincent ; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 27*, 454.

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill
c. *con.* Apr. 27*, 591.
c. 3R.* *Apr. 28*, 776.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 931
Instruction to Standing Committee, *Apr. 21*, 103.

Courts-Martial
Number submitted to Judge Advocate-General's Department, number quashed etc., for years 1900, 1901, 1902. *Q.* Mr. H. D. Greene ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1505.

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill
c. Rep. Apr. 28*, 642.

Craig, Mr. Charles [Antrim, S.]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1461.
River Bann and Lough Neagh, Overflowing of—Introduction of Legislation for Abatement of Flooding, *May 6*, 1516.

Cranborne, Lord—*Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs* [Rochester]
Anatolian Railway Concession—Convention between Turkish Government and Concessionaires of the Anatolian Railway Company—Date on which Copy was received by British Government, *Apr. 29*, 790.
Bagdad Railway, Communications from British Ambassador at Constantinople on Subject of—Laying of Correspondence before the House, *Apr. 29*, 790.

Cranborne, Lord—*cont.*
Central Africa, Famine in—Steps to alleviate distress, *May 6*, 1512.
Congo Free State, British Consuls at—Consideration of Additional Appointments, *May 4*, 1196.
Congo Free State, Presentations of Reports on—Previous to Debate on the Congo State—Observance of Terms of Berlin Conference, *May 4*, 1196.
Consular Representation, Increase of, *Apr. 30*, 944.
East Africa, Concessions in—Grant of Return Relative to, *Apr. 27*, 464.
Entebbe, Uganda.
 Native and European Quarters, proximity of—Proposed Removal of Native Huts, *May 6*, 1504.
 Water Supply, Inadequacy of—Contamination by Sewage—Improvement of Present Conditions, *May 6*, 1503.
Kobè Medical Practice—Case of Mr. S. T. Knaggs, M.D., F.R.C.S.I., *Apr. 28*, 656.
Macedonian Reform Scheme — Information with regard to execution of promised reforms, *Apr. 27*, 465.
Manchuria, Evacuation of.
 Failure on part of Russian Government to observe provisions of Convention, Steps to secure fulfilment of promise, *Apr. 30*, 952.
 Mining Experts—Attempt of Russian Government to secure the employment of Russians only, Steps to secure equality for all nationalities, *Apr. 30*, 953.
 Russian demand for dismissal of British doctor from position of health officer at Niu-Chwang in favour of a Russian doctor, *Apr. 30*, 952.
 Statement of intentions of British Government with regard to Russian demands, *Apr. 29*, 789.
 Statement of Russian Ambassador, *May 1*, 1135.
Morocco, Condition of—British residents in Tetuan, protection of, *May 4*, 1197.
Niu-Chwang Revenues, Retention of, by Russian Government—Restoration of, Result of representations with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 952.
Opium Tax, China—Imposition of additional tax by Government of the province of Canton—Discontinuance of, owing to protests of British Consul, *May 5*, 1365.
Passionist Fathers in Paris — Enforced dissolution of community—Correspondence between English Embassy and French Government, *Apr. 23*, 222.
St. Louis International Exhibition, British co-operation in Appointment of Commission, Grant for purpose of Exhibition, *Apr. 28*, 648.

[*cont.*

Cranborne, Lord—*cont.*

Somaliland—Military Operations.

Answers to Criticisms and Questions—Conduct of the Mullah—Relations with the Italian Government—Operations of Colonel Swayne, *Apr. 30*, 972.

Operations of British Troops outside British Somaliland without Parliamentary Sanction, *Apr. 28*, 655.

Statistics as to Cost of Operations during last Ten Years, *Apr. 22*, 108.

South African Mines.

Employment of Native Labour in Transvaal Mines—Recruiting of Natives in Central Africa—Approved Rate of Wages, *Apr. 23*, 219.

Recruitment of Labour from British East Africa—Protest of Blantyre Chamber of Agriculture, Discouragement of Scheme, *Apr. 28*, 655.

Tientsin Railway Siding—Dispute between Great Britain and Russia, Result of Arbitration, *Apr. 29*, 789; *Apr. 30*, 951.

Uganda Railways—Construction of Railway from Lake Victoria to Lake Albert—Government Intentions, *May 6*, 1512.

Venezuela.

Arbitration—State of Negotiations with regard to Proposal for, etc., *Apr. 21*, 7.

Claims of Nations, Order in which to be Considered—Expenses of Blockade, Attitude of Venezuelan Government towards, *Apr. 27*, 465.

Western Persia—British Commerce in, River Karun, Values and Bulk of Total Traffic on, Encouragement of Use of Route by British and Indian Traders, *Apr. 28*, 654.

Cremation

England and Wales—Regulations with Reference to Maintenance and Inspection of Crematoria, etc., Presented, *Apr. 27*, 442.

Cremer, Mr. William [Shoreditch, Haggerston]

London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 760.

Parks—Letting of Chairs—Refreshment Kiosks, *May 6*, 1593.

Cripps, Mr. C. [Lancashire, Stretford]

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1100.

Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1584.

Crombie, Mr. J. W. [Kincardineshire]

Scotch Education—Leaving Certificates Alteration of regulations for, proposed, *Apr. 23*, 210.

Trawling, Illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish Fisheries, *Apr. 22*, 198.

Crooks, Mr. W. [Woolwich]

Destitute English Immigrants in Canada—Case of men emigrating on promise of work by Dominion Iron and Steel Company—Non-employment on arrival—Arrangements for return of Immigrants, *May 4*, 1190.

Crown Lands

Revenue for—*Debate on Budget Statement*, *Apr. 23*, 292.

Wales—*Debate* [H.C.] *Apr. 29*, 900.

Boundaries, Specification of, 903, 909.

Commission of Woods and Forests, Conduct of 900, 909, 911.

Mineral Resources of Crown Lands, 908.

Rates from Crown Lands, 903.

Welsh Land Commission, Report of—901, 909, 911.

Cruelty to Animals

Grand National Steeplechase—Cruelty to Horses—Steps for Prevention of.

Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas; *Apr. 27*, 450.

Cunard Agreement

Parliamentary Sanction, date of.

Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 4*, 1203.

Customs Department

Employees, Number—Increase of since Introduction of Sugar and Corn Duties.

Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Elliot, *Apr. 22*, 112.

Customs Duties

Tea, *see* Tea.

Cyprus

Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 439.

Dalziel, Mr. J. H. [Kirkcaldy Burghs]

Hansard Contract Reporting, *Apr. 21*, 84.

Protest against altering speeches in proof before publication, *Apr. 21*, 92.

South Africa, Development of Trade with—Differences in freights from this country and United States, *Apr. 22*, 168.

Treasury—Post of Director of Suez Canal given to Superannuated Clerk—Duties of Commercial *Attachés*, *Apr. 21*, 97, 100, 101.

Davenport, Mr. W. Bromley [Cheshire, Macclesfield.]

Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 539.

Davies, Mr. A. [Carmarthen Boroughs]
London and North Western Railway—Carriage arrangements for Goods—Questionable practices with regard to—Stoppage of, proposed, *Apr. 27*, 453; *Apr. 29*, 792.

Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
see title Marriage with, etc.

Delany, Mr. W. [Queen's Co., Ossory]
Corn Duty—Refund of duty upon imported grain proposed, *May 5*, 1371.
Irish Rate Collections—Date of, inconvenient to Agriculturists—Extension of time proposed, *Apr. 30*, 959.
Mountmellick Mail Service—Delay in Delivery of Mails, *Apr. 30*, 961.
Royal Irish Constabulary—Official Papers, Destruction of, *May 5*, 1370.

Devlin, Mr. C. [Galway]
Alaskan Boundary Dispute Commission—Jurists on, Canadian Government objection to selection of, made by United States, *Apr. 30*, 951.
Galway Harbour—Improvement of, Application for hire of Dredger from Scotch Harbour Authority, Result of, *Apr. 27*, 477.
Galway Housing Accommodation—Inadequacy of, Desirability of empowering Urban Council to deal with question, *Apr. 30*, 960.
Irish National School Teachers' Pension Fund—Case of Mr. Keane, Alleged refusal of Superannuation Allowance, *Apr. 28*, 649.
Postage Rates to Canada—Periodicals sent from Canada at lower rates than from Great Britain and Ireland—Reduction of Rates proposed, *Apr. 30*, 955.

Denmark
Agricultural Enterprise of.
Observations in Com., Apr. 21, 54.
Convention between United Kingdom and Denmark Regulating Fisheries in Ocean surrounding Faroe Islands and Iceland, Presented, *Apr. 21*, 4; *Apr. 27*, 436.

Devon and Cornwall Coast
see Harbours.

Devonshire, Duke of—*Lord President of the Council*
Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 632.

Dewar, Mr. John [Inverness]
Royal Palaces—Removal of Court and Levées from Holyrood, *Apr. 21*, 10.
Treasury—Exchequer Department in Scotland, *Apr. 21*, 98.

Dewar, Sir T. [Tower Hamlets, St. George's]
Consular Representation, Suggested increase of, *Apr. 30*, 944.
Hampton Court Palace — Refreshment Kiosk, erection of, proposed, *May 4*, 1182.

Dewar, Sir T.—*cont.*
Rough Riders and Scouts—Enlistment of Men under Army Height Regulation as Rough Riders and for Scouting purposes, *Apr. 30*, 947.

Dickinson, Mr. R. E. [Somersetshire, Wells]
Great Western Railway Bill, *Apr. 21*, 76.

Dickson, Mr. C. Scott—*Solicitor-General for Scotland* [Glasgow, Bridgton]
Holyrood Palace, Occupation and Sanitary Condition of, *Apr. 21*, 12.

Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. [Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean]
Belfast Factories, Fines in—Case of Squire *v.* Messrs. McBride and Williams—Imposition of Fines disproportionate to earnings—Possibility of Appeal, *Apr. 28*, 656.
Congo Free State, Reports on—Presentation of, previous to Debate on the Congo State, proposed—Inquiries as to observance of terms of Berlin Conference, *May 4*, 1196.
Cunard Agreement—Parliamentary Sanction, Date of, *May 4*, 1203.
Guns—Rate of firing of quick-firing and non-quick-firing guns—Consideration of, on Vote in the Estimates, *Apr. 30*, 949.
Railway Rates — Complaints as to, *Apr. 22*, 173.
Sierra Leone Coaling Station—Progress of Armament of, *Apr. 27*, 457.
Tientsin Railway Siding Dispute between Great Britain and Russia—Result of Arbitration, *Apr. 29*, 789.
Transvaal Mines—Law regulating ventilation of Mines and Protection of Workmen—Administration of, *May 6*, 1510.

Dillon, Mr. J. [Mayo, E.]
Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1300.
Somaliland Expedition — Protest against excessive expenditure—Objections to use of the Dum-Dum bullet, *Apr. 30*, 988.

Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir J. C. [London City]
Electric Trams—Accidents caused by—Protection of the Public, *Apr. 30*, 939.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 836.

Dinorwic
Quarry Dispute.
Os. Mr. Vicary Gibbs, *Apr. 27*, 523; Mr. Bryn Roberts, *Apr. 27*, 561.

Diplomatic and Consular Service
Congo Free State—British Consuls at—Consideration of additional appointments.
Q. Mr. J. Walton; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 4*, 1196.
Consular Representation—Suggested Increase of.
Q. Sir T. Dewar; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 30*, 944.
Efficiency of, necessity for, in Persia.
Os. Lord Lamington, *May 5*, 1336.

Diseases of Animals
Orders in Council Presented, *Apr. 27*, 443.

District Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Dockyards
Storehouse Staff — Reorganisation of, under consideration, no decision yet arrived at.
Q. Mr. R. Lucas; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 22*, 109.

Dogs
Lost Dogs sold by Auction by the Police—Amount realised by sale in relation to cost of keep of dogs.
Q. Colonel Legge; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *May 4*, 1187.

Donelan, Captain A. J. C. [Cork, E.]
All-India Memorial to Queen Victoria, Site of— Funds, Amount contributed by princes, chiefs, etc.—Application of portion of fund to productive, remedial, or beneficial purposes, proposed, *Apr. 27*, 462.
Greenock School Board Election—Alleged refusal to admit authorised personation agent to polling place—Action of Chief Constable, *Apr. 27*, 472.
Ireland, Depopulation of—Enlargement of provisions dealing with in Irish Land Bill in view of, proposed, *Apr. 23*, 212.
Irish Civil Expenditure — Proposed reduction of — Application of saving thus effected to Irish purposes, *Apr. 27*, 473.
Irish Constabulary at Railway Stations—Proposed discontinuance of daily attendance, *Apr. 27*, 474.
Irish Land Bill—References to sections of other Statutes — Circulation of, for convenience of Members, *Apr. 27*, 473.

Doughty, Mr. G. [Great Grimsby]
Lighthouses, Maintenance of, *Apr. 22*, 167.

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A.—*Secretary of State for the Home Department* [Kent, St. Augustine's]
Convicts called as Witnesses—Allowance of improved Fare while attending Courts of Law, *May 4*, 1187.
Dogs—Lost dogs sold by Auction by the Police, Amount realised by sale in relation to cost of keep of dogs, *May 4*, 1187.
Electric Trams, Accidents caused by, Protection of the Public, *Apr. 30*, 939.
Grand National Steeplechase—Cruelty to horses attending the race, Steps for the prevention of such occurrence, *Apr. 27*, 450.
Prisons, Unproductive Labour in, Abolition of, *Apr. 27*, 451.

Dover Corporation Bill
C. 2R* *Com.* *Apr. 30*, 932.

Dublin.
Marlborough Street Training College. Dwelling House accommodation for Students, provision of.
Q. Mr. T. W. Russell; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1200.
Motor Car Fatality—Withdrawal of proceedings against Marquess of Downshire, Grounds for.
Q. Mr. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 478.
Museum Employees, position of, Grant of Terms contained in memorial.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 30*, 945.

Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill
l. 2R.* *Com. Apr. 30*, 913.
Rep.* *May 5*, 1325.

Duke, Mr. H. E. [Plymouth]
Post Office Reforms—Position of the Postmaster-General — Difficulty of gleaning reliable information concerning the Grievances of Post Office Employees, *Apr. 30*, 1044.

Dum-dum Bullet.
see Army.

Duncan, Mr. J. H. [Yorkshire, W. R., Otley]
South African Transport—Tenders for carriage of Government Stores from all British Steamship Companies trading with South Africa, *Apr. 24*, 358.

Durham County Council
Education Act—Forfeit of money by postponement of adoption of Act, Amount of.
Q. Mr. L. Wharton; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Apr. 27*, 472.

Dyke, Sir W. Hart [Kent, Dartford]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 850.

East Ardsley Gas Bill.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
2R.* *Com.* *May 5*, 1325.

Edge Hill Station (L. and N.W. Railway)
Telegraphic Facilities—Establishment of, proposed.
Q. Mr. M. Hall; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1367.

Edinburgh
Royal Astronomical Observatory—Annual Report, presented [H.C.], *Apr. 21*, 4; [H.L.] *Apr. 27*, 439.

Education
Grants—Amount payable by County Council under provisions of Education Act, 1892, to School Board Parishes in respect of former Board Schools.
Q. Mr. H. Hobhouse; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 24*, 357.

[*cont.*

Education—*cont.*

Ireland.

Commissioners' Annua Report, presented, *May 4*, 1141, 1182.

National Schools—Inspectors' Reports for 1901—Date of Issue to Board of Education.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1518.

Local Authority and By-Laws for School Attendance Regulations with regard to Making of New Laws and Continuation of Existing ones.
Q. Mr. H. Hobhouse ; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Apr. 29*, 781.

London Education Bill, *see* that Title.

Public Elementary Schools — Contributions by Government Departments—Return presented, *May 4*, 1182.

Schools, Transfer of—Power of Transfer in hands of School Managers.
Q. Mr. G. Kenyon ; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Apr. 27*. 449.

Scotland.

Grants—Return Showing Expenditure —Cross Grant for Public Education in 1902 — List of Day Schools Aided from Parliamentary Grant—Statistics of Day Schools in Receipt of Annual Grants under Code, presented, *Apr. 27*, 437.

Leaving Certificates—Alteration of Regulations for, proposed.
Q. Mr. Crombie ; *A.* Mr. G. Murray, *Apr. 23*, 210.

Education Act, 1902

Town and County Councils—Forfeit of Money in Consequence of Postponement of Adoption of Act—Case of Durham County Council.
Q. Mr. L. Wharton ; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Apr. 27*, 472.

Education, Board of

Education Committees—Statement of Schemes for Formation of, presented [H.C.], *Apr. 23*, 209 ; [H.L.] *Apr. 27*, 440.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (East Ham, etc.)

l. 1R* *Apr. 28*, 640.

Education (Borrowing) Bill

c. 1R* *Apr. 23*, 228.

Edwards, Mr. F. [Radnor]

Bishops Froome Charity — Refusal of Trustees to Render Annual Account to Parish Council, *May 4*, 1200.

Egypt

Finances—Administration and Condition —Report presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.

Guaranteed Loan of 1885—Account presented, *Apr. 27*, 442.

Report of Agent and Consul-General presented, *Apr. 21*, 4.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No 1) Bill

c. 2R.* *Com. Apr. 24*, 445.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in, Ordered, *Apr. 22*, 107.

Return presented, *Apr. 23*, 209.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill

c. 2R.* *Com.* * *Apr. 28*, 641.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in, Ordered, *Apr. 22*, 107.

Return presented, *Apr. 23*, 209.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill

c. 2R.* *Com.* * *Apr. 28*, 641.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in, Ordered, *Apr. 22*, 107.

Return presented, *Apr. 23*, 210.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill

c. Ordered, *Apr. 23*, 206.

1R.* *Apr. 23*, 207.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in Provisional Orders, presented, *May 6*, 1502.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill

c. Ordered, *Apr. 23*, 206.

1R.* *Apr. 23*, 207.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in Provisional Orders, presented, *May 6*, 1502.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill

c. Ordered, *Apr. 23*, 206.

1R.* *Apr. 23*, 207.

2R.* *Com. May 6*, 1497.

Memorandum stating Nature of Proposals contained in Provisional Orders, presented, *May 6*, 1502.

Electric Tramways

see Tramways.

Elementary Education Amendment Bill

*c. con.** *Apr. 24*, 432.

Rep.* *Apr. 24*, 432.

Ellenborough, Lord

Bagdad Railway—Construction of — Necessity for acknowledgment of British control over Persian Gulf, and Bagdad end of line, *May 5*, 1340.

Elliot, Mr. A.—*Financial Secretary to the Treasury* [Durham]

Civil Service.

Writers' Pensions—Terms of engagement of Writers registered in 1870–1871—Differences between, as regards pension, *Apr. 30*, 945.

[*cont.*

Elliot, Mr. A.—*cont.*

Civil Service—*cont.*

Examinations—Successful Candidates for 1902—Number of, offering Shorthand as examination subject, *May 5*, 1365.

Crown Lands in Wales, *Apr. 29*, 911.

Customs Department Employees — Increase in number of since introduction of Sugar and Corn Duties, *Apr. 22*, 112.

Dublin Museums—Employees, Position of —Grant of terms contained in memorial, *Apr. 30*, 945.

Fair Wages Resolution—Reading Printing Works and scale of wages, *Apr. 21*, 69, 85, 91.

House of Lords Manuscripts, Volume 2, Presentation of, to House of Commons, *Apr. 29*, 782.

Income Tax, Terms of reference to—Select Committee—Inclusion in, of examination into practicability of graduation of the tax above the £700 limit, *Apr. 29*, 793.

Irish Manuscripts—Translation of, Transfer of Publication of Manuscripts. Translation of "Tigermach," *Apr. 22*, 109.

Irish National School Teachers' Pension Fund—Case of Mr. Keene. Alleged Refusal of Superannuation Allowance, *Apr. 28*, 649.

Osborne House Naval College, Cost of—*May 6*, 1590.

Sugar Refineries—Necessity of placing Sugar Refineries in Bond, under terms of Brussels Sugar Convention, Cost to be borne by the Crown, *Apr. 22*, 113.

Treasury—Exchequer Department in Scotland, Directorship of Suez Canal, &c., *Apr. 21*, 99, 100.

Ellis, Mr. John [Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe]

Agricultural Products—Railway Rates, *Apr. 22*, 118.

Bethesda—(Industrial Dispute), *Apr.* 27, 536.

Motor Cars—Speed Regulations, *May 5*, 1371.

Railways—Accidents, Action for prevention of, *Apr. 22*, 118.

Ely Valley Railway

Amalgamation with Great Western Railway.

Os. Mr. Dickinson, *Apr. 21*, 77; Lord E. Fitzmaurice, 81; Mr. Courtenay Warner, 82.

Emigration

See Irish Land Bill.

Emmott, Mr. A. [Oldham]

Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1492.

London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 743.

Emmott, Mr. A.—*cont.*

Taxation—Provision for Sinking Fund—Remission of Corn Duty—Reduction of the Income Tax—Incidence of the Income Tax — Request for remission of indirect taxation, *Apr. 23*, 303.

Endowed Schools and Education Endowments

Chew's Foundation—Scheme for Management of, Presented, [H.C.] *Apr. 23*, 210; [H.L.] *Apr. 27*, 443.

Evictions, Ireland

Berridge Estate, Evictions for non-payment of rent—Extent and rental of holdings.

Q. Mr. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 23*, 224.

Number of Eviction Notices filed in Quarter ending March 31, 1903 — Return Presented, *Apr. 27*, 440.

Return Presented, *Apr. 23*, 209; *Apr. 27*, 440, 448.

Exchange Telegraph Company

Circulation of an unfounded Rumour with regard to assassination of King in Paris — Criminal liability for such procedure.

Q. Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir R. Finlay, *May* 4, 1199.

Exchequer Bonds

Payment or renewal of Bonds repayable in present year.

Q. Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 4*, 1186.

Exeter Railway Bill

l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.
c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Explosives

Ignition of Powder at the E.C. Powder Company's Factory at Stone, near Dartford—Report Presented, *Apr. 27* 437.

Faber, Mr. E. B. [Hampshire, Andover]

Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1585

Faber, Mr. G. [York]

Land Purchase Acts—Recovery of Instalments of Annuities under, *Apr. 27*, 455.

Factories and Workshops

Piece Work Wages—Application of Section (116) of Factory and Workshop Act 1901, to making of Felt Hats, *Apr. 30*, 916, 936.

Fair Wages Resolution

Hansard Contract—Alleged Breach of Fair Wages Resolution, *Os. Apr. 21*, 69.

Vickers, Son, and Maxim, Messrs., Alleged breach of, by, *May 4*, 1188.

Farquharson, Dr. R. [Aberdeenshire, W.]
Kensington, Loss of open space at—*Apr. 21*, 31.
Medical Officers—England and Wales, Counties in which Officers are appointed, number of cases in which whole time is devoted to duties of office, *Apr. 27*, 469.
Sewage Disposal—Report of Royal Commission, Carrying out of recommendations of—*May 4*, 1198.
Ventilation and sanitary condition of the House, *Apr. 21*, 38.

Faversham Gas Bill
l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.
c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Fellowes, Mr. A. E.—*Lord of the Treasury* [Huntingdonshire, Ramsey]
Birdcage Walk, Condition of Roadway in—*Apr. 21*, 34.
Cemeteries for British soldiers in Ionian Islands—Maintenance of cemeteries abroad, *Apr. 21*, 41.
Hampton Court Palace.
Refreshment Kiosk, proposed erection of unnecessary, *May 4*, 1182.
Vandalism at, *Apr. 21*, 24, 25.
Holyrood Palace, Sanitary condition of, *Apr. 21*, 10, 19 ; *Apr. 22*, 113 ; *May 6*, 1591.
Kensington, Loss of open space at, *Apr. 21*, 33.
Lockers for Members—Select Committee on Ventilation — Accommodation in the House — Postal and telegraph arrangements, *Apr. 21*, 38.
Osborne House, Expenditure on—Naval and Military uses, *Apr. 21*, 27.
Park-keepers, Position of, *Apr. 21*, 34.
Public Record Office, Protection from fire, *Apr. 29*, 722.
Richmond Park, Widening of paths in, *Apr. 21*, 34.
Sanitation of Post and Telegraph offices, *Apr. 21*, 42.

Fenwick, Mr. C. [Northumberland, Wansbeck]
South African War—Prisoners undergoing sentences for offences arising out of War, Liberation of, *Apr. 29*, 780.

Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. [Manchester, N.E.]
Exchange Telegraph Company—Circulation of an unfounded rumour with regard to assassination of King in Paris, Criminal Liability for such Procedure, *May 4*, 1199.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1093.
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1567.
Verbatim Reports of Speeches not Desirable, *Apr. 21*, 93.

Field, Mr. W. [Dublin, St. Patrick]
Dublin Museum—Employees, Position of—Grant of Terms contained in Memorial, *Apr. 30*, 945.
Town Holdings Committee—Re-appointment of, *Apr. 29*, 796.

Fiji
Chiefs, Deportation of without Trial—Removal of Ordinance from Statute Book, with regard to, proposed.
Q. Mr. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1370.
Forced Labour on Fijian Roads.
Q. Mr. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1369.
Native Petition to the King—Permission for Presentation of.
Q. Mr. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1370.
Native Regulations, Report on—Steps to obtain Report from New Zealand.
Q. Mr. C Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1369.
Poll Tax—Alleged Imposition of, Effect upon Labour, etc.
Q. Mr. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1369.
Suva—Bubonic Plague Hospital in—Protest against Establishment of—Reply in Answer to.
Q. Mr. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1370.

Finlay, Sir R.—*Attorney-General* [Inverness Burghs]
Clifford's Inn, Sale of.
Amount of proceeds applicable to, purposes of Legal Education—Value of Clifford's Inn, number of members, etc., *Apr. 30*, 958.
Assent of Attorney-General to Reasons for—Proposed Alternative Scheme impracticable, *Apr. 30*, 957.
Laying of statement on subject of, before the House—Opportunity for discussion of scheme of Legal Education, *Apr. 30*, 957.
Exchange Telegraphic Company—Circulation of an unfounded rumour with regard to assassination of King in Paris — Criminal liability for such procedure, *May 4*, 1199.
Shrewsbury Election Petition—Prosecutions for corruption, *May 4*, 1198.

First Commissioner of Works—*Rt. Hon. Lord Windsor.*

First Lord of the Admiralty—*Earl of Selborne.*

First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister—*Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour.*

Fisheries
Convention between United Kingdom and Denmark, regulating fisheries in ocean surrounding Faroe Islands and Iceland, Presented *Apr. 21*, 4, *Apr. 27*, 436.

[*cont.*

Fisheries—*cont.*
Ireland.
Report presented, *May 4*, 1141, 1182.
Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund (Non-congested Districts) Annual Account, presented,- *Apr. 27*, 443, 448.
Scotland.
Protection against Trawlers necessary.
Qs. Mr. Cathcart Wason, *Apr. 22*, 189; Mr. Black, 192; Mr. Weir, 195; Mr. Bignold, 196; Mr. Crombie, 198; Mr. Graham Murray, 199; Captain Sinclair, 203.
Report presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.
Three-mile limit, *see* Trawling.
Sea Fisheries of United Kingdom—Return presented, *Apr. 21*, 6.

Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund [Wiltshire, Cricklade]
Great Western Railway Bill, *Apr. 21*, 81.

Fitzroy, Mr. A. E. [Northamptonshire, S.]
Civil Service Estimates, Class 7, Vote 2, Discussion of, *Apr. 22*, 111.
Railways—Rates for Agricultural produce, *Apr. 22*, 167.

Flags
Foreign use of British.
Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 22, 156, 162.

Flavin, Mr. M. J. [Kerry, N.]
Bovine Tuberculosis — Compensation to owners, consideration of subsequent to issue of Report, *Apr. 29*, 791.

Flower Mr. E. [Bradford, W.]
Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Institutions, Number of, *Apr. 27*, 451.
Prisons — Unproductive Labour in, Abolition of, *Apr. 27*, 451.

Foreign Office
Foreign Orders—Regulations with regard to acceptance by British Officials—Case of British Ambassador at Rome.
Q. Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 6*, 1520.

Forestry
British Forestry, Committee on—Minutes of Evidence, with appendices and index, presented, *Apr. 23*, 209; *Apr. 27*, 440.
Scotland — State Forest in — Proposed establishment of.
Q. Sir A. Agnew; *A.* Mr. Hanbury, *Apr. 22*, 108.

"Formidable"
Collision between "Bulwark" and "Formidable"—Extent of damage, Alleged prohibition of account of incident being sent home.
Qs. Sir W. Allan, Mr. G. Bowles; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 30*, 949.

Foster, Sir Michael [London University]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 839.

Foster, Sir Walter [Derbyshire, Ilkeston]
Midwives Board—Meetings of, issue of minutes of meetings, date of, *May 6*, 1507.
Pauper Children—Ophthalmia and Ringworm, Number of Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Schools suffering from, *May 1*, 1074.
Post Office, suggested reforms in the—Restrictions with regard to the repurchase of stamps—Grievances of employees—Necessity for inspection of sanitation, *Apr. 30*, 1034.

Fowler, Sir Henry [Wolverhampton, E.]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 853.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1127.

Furness, Sir C. [Hartlepool]
Obsolete Warships—Stipulation relating to vessels being broken up in United Kingdom—Abrogation of, in case of sale of ships at Devonport, *May 6*, 1509.

Galloway, Mr. W. J. [Manchester, S.W.]
County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill, *May 21*; 104.

Galway
Harbour, Improvement of—Application for hire of dredger from Scotch Harbour Authority.
Q. Mr. C. Devlin; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 477.
Housing Accommodation, Inadequacy of—Desirability of empowering Urban Council to deal with question.
Q. Mr. C. Devlin; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 30*, 960.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1139.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1140.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1140.

Gas Undertakings
Authorised Gas Undertakings — Return Ordered, *May 1*, 1135.

Gibbs, Mr. Vicary [Hertfordshire, St. Albans]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 520.

Glanders
Necessity for Notification of.
Q. Mr. L. Sinclair, *Apr. 21*, 49.

Gordon, Mr. J. [Londonderry, S.]
Magherafelt Disturbances — Action of Police on occasion of, Full investigation, *Apr. 27*, 474.

Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- [Lincoln, Gainsborough]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1429.
Workmen's Compensation Act—Medical Referees under, assisting County Court Judges, Number of Cases, *Apr. 22*, 112.

Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill
c. Rep. May 1*, 1068.

Gorst, Sir John [Cambridge University]
Bethesda, (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 556.
Budget Resolutions, Order of taking, *May 6*, 1583.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 713.
Osborne House, Expenditure on, *Apr. 21*, 28 ; *May 6*, 1590.
Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1583.

Goschen, Viscount
Kinloch, Case of Colonel, *May 4*, 1170.

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways Bill
l. Com. Apr. 27*, 434.

Goulding, Mr. E. A. [Wiltshire, Devizes]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1442.
Irish Land Purchase Acts—Unexpended Funds under, *May 4*, 1188.
Post Office Reforms with regard to Postal Orders—Wages of Post Office Employees, *Apr. 30*, 1036.

Grand National Steeplechase
Cruelty to horses attending the race—Steps for prevention of such occurrences.
Q. Mr. Lough ; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *Apr. 27*, 450.

Grant, Mr. Corrie [Warwickshire, Rugby]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 865.

Great Central Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Great Central Railway Bill
c. Com. May 4*, 1178.

Great Eastern Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Great Eastern Railway Bill
c. Rep. with *Amendts. Apr. 24*, 354.
con. May 1*, 1068.
3R.* *May 5*, 1358.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill
c. 3R.* *Apr. 21*, 1.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
2R.* *Com.* May 5*, 1325.

Great Northern Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Great Western Railway Bill
Debate [H.C.], *Apr. 21*, 69 ; Second Reading, *Apr. 21*, 83.
Agricultural Produce, Carriage of, *Apr. 21*, 71.
Amalgamation with other Lines, *Apr. 21*, 77, 81, 82.

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill
l. 2R.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
Rep.* *May 5*, 1325.

Greece
Loan of 1891—Account Presented, *Apr. 27*, 442.

Greene, Mr. H. D. [Shrewsbury]
Military Courts-Martial—Number submitted to Judge Advocate, number quashed, etc., for years 1900, 1901, 1902, *May 6*, 1505.
Public Record Office, Protection from Fire, *Apr. 29*, 792.

Greenock
School Board Election—Alleged refusal to admit authorised personation Agent to polling place, Action of Chief Constable.
Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. G. Murray, *Apr. 27*, 472.

Grenadier Guards
Kinloch, Case of Colonel—*Debate* [H.L.] *May 4*, 1142.

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward [Northumberland, Berwick]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1386.

Griffith, Mr. Ellis [Anglesey]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 549.

Groves, Mr. J. G. [Salford, S.]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 398.

Guest, Mr. [Plymouth]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1090.

Guatemala
Accession of Republic to Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded in Armies in the Field—Copy Presented, *May 1*, 1072.

Gurdon, Sir Brampton [Norfolk, N.]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1123.

Guthrie, Mr. W. M. [Tower Hamlets, Bow]
Convicts called as Witnesses—Allowance of Improved Fare while attending Courts of Law, *May 4*, 1187.
Poplar Vaccination Registers—Report of Committee of Poplar Guardians with respect to entries in, Investigation proposed, *Apr. 27*, 452.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B. [Haddington]
- Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 528.
- London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 703.
- Naval and Military Expenditure, Necessity for Curtailment of, *Apr. 23*, 275.
- Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1584.
- Taxation—Plea for relieving burden of indirect Taxpayers—Position of Income Taxpayers—National Debt compared with that of other countries, *Apr. 23*, 271.

Hall, Mr. M. [Lancashire, Southport]
- Edge Hill Station (L. and N.W. Railway) Telegraphic Facilities—Establishment of, proposed, *May 5*, 1367.
- Telegraph Service—Telegrams to London—Omission of word London, if postal district is given — Transmission of Telegrams so addressed, Instructions to Telegraph Offices on subject of, *May 5*, 1367.

Halsbury, Earl of—*Lord Chancellor.*
- Case of Colonel Kinloch, *May 4*, 1177.
- Military Law of Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 637.
- Shops (Early Closing) Bill, *Apr. 28*, 609.

Halsey, Rt. Hon. T. F. [Hertfordshire, Watford]
- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1129.

Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George—*Secretary of State for India* [Middlesex, Ealing]
- Customs Tariff—Duties Imposed on Military Band Instruments of 1st Seaforth Highlanders on arrival in India—Grounds for Imposition, Removal of Duty, etc., *May 4*, 1195.
- Irrigated Lands, Revenue Derived from—Acreage of Lands Contributing to Revenue, *Apr. 30*, 941.
- Irrigation Works, Special Grants for, Unexpended Balance of, reason for, *Apr. 30*, 942.
- Judges, Retiring Pensions of Indian—Case of Sir Bhashyam Aiyanger, exceptional nature of, *Apr. 24*, 357.
- Loans by Government to Native States, Amount of, Average Rate of Interest, *Apr. 30*, 941.
- Lord Ampthill and Indian Administration, *Apr. 23*, 218.
- Madras Law Students, Prohibition of, from taking part in Discussions on Public Affairs—Sanction of Government, *Apr. 23*, 217.
- Panna.
  - Cost of Enquiry into Charges arising out of the Death of the Uncle of the Rajah of, *Apr. 30*, 940.
  - No Treaties between British Government and Ruling Chiefs of, *Apr. 30*, 942.

Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George—*cont.*
- Railways.
  - Delhi Railway Conference, *Apr. 23*, 217; *May 6*, 1504, 1511.
  - State Purchase of Indian Railways, *Apr. 27*, 450.

Hampton Court Palace
- Refreshment Kiosk, Erection of proposed.
  - *Q.* Sir T. Dewar; *A.* Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, *May 4*, 1182.
- Vandalism at.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Kearley, Mr. J. Burns, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, *Apr. 21*, 21, 24.

The Late Rt. Hon. R. W. Hanbury — *President of Board of Agriculture* [Preston]
- Agriculture—Board of.
  - Communication between Departments—Starved condition of Board of Agriculture — Introduction of Argentine Cattle — Agricultural Education — Railway Rates for Farmers — Decrease of Cattle diseases—Inspection of Cattle, etc., *Apr. 21*, 58.
- Railway Rates — Complaints received through Board of Agriculture, *Apr. 22*, 167.
- Death of — Expressions of regret—Mr. Schwann, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Chaplin, Sir W. Tomlinson, *Apr. 28*, 659.
- Forestry — State Forest in Scotland — Proposed establishment of, *Apr. 22*, 108.

Harbours
- Devon and Cornwall Coast.
  - *Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 22*, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186.
- Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 43.

Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William [Monmouth, W.]
- Budget.
  - National Debt and Sinking Fund, Proportions between, *Apr. 23*, 265.
  - Naval and Military Expenditure—Protest against excessive expenditure on Armaments, *Apr. 23*, 265.
  - Resolutions, opportunity for discussion on, *Apr. 23*, 351.
  - Taxation—Income Tax, Injustice of the—Direct or Indirect Taxation—Repeal of the Corn Duty, *Apr. 23*, 258, 341.

Hardie, Mr. J. K. [Merthyr Tydvil]
- Army Contracts—Messrs. Chapman's Contract for Manufacture of Sword Bayonets—Employment of Women in Place of Men at Reduced Wages, *May 6*, 1509.

[*cont.*

Hardie, Mr. J. K.—*cont.*

Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 505.

Portsmouth Dockyard Storehousemen, Status of Reply to Communication on Subject of, *May 6*, 1502.

Settle Limestone Quarry Company, Lock-out of Employees, Re-engagement refused until Membership of Trade Union renounced, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Simonstown, South Africa—Construction of Docks at, Employment of Continental Workmen and Indian Coolies to the Disadvantage of British and South African Workmen, Observance of Fair Wages Resolution, *May 4*, 1189.

Vickers, Son and Maxim, Messrs.—Fair Wages Resolution—Violation of, at Brightside Works, alleged, *May 4*, 1188.

West India Docks Admiralty Stationery Store Staff—Promotion of Labourers of Nine Months Service to Charge of, in Preference to Men of Service of longer Periods, Proposed Inquiry, *May 6*, 1508.

Hardwicke, Earl of—*Under Secretary of State for War.*

Kinloch, Case of Colonel, *May 4*, 1148.

Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 626.

Hardy, Mr. L. [Kent, Ashford]

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1122.

Harmsworth, Mr. R. L. [Caithness]

Cruiser "Pique" and sloop "Rosario," Prize-firing Records, *Apr. 28*, 646.

Naval Reserve—Men Employed in Royal Dockyards, Number of on Mobilisation List, *Apr. 30*, 942.

Niclausse Boilers in the Navy—Admiralty Experiments with, Results, *Apr. 28*, 647.

Wireless Telegraphy—Annual Admiralty Expenditure on, *Apr. 28*, 647.

Harris, Lord

Case of Colonel Kinloch, *May 4*, 1176.

Harris, Mr. F. L. [Tynemouth]

Post Office Electric Generating Station—Proposed provision of—Purposes for which required, Offer of Companies' generating energy, *Apr. 29*, 781.

Shipping Legislation, Extension of legislation applicable to British shipping trading to ports in United Kingdom, to foreign-owned vessels, Committee of Inquiry proposed. *Apr. 23*, 223.

Harrison, Captain—Case of

Appeal of—against suspension of certificate of S.S. "Grecian," Payment of costs of appeal—Result of Conference with regard to.
Q. Lord Muskerry; *A.* Lord Wolverton, *May 5*, 1354.

Harrogate Water Bill

l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 5*, 1326.

Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill

l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 5*, 1326.

Harwood, Mr. G. [Bolton]

Houses of Parliament—Buildings — Accommodation in the House, *Apr. 21*, 37.

South Africa, British trade in—Shipping ring, *Apr. 22*, 172.

Hay, Mr. C. [Shoreditch, Hoxton]

Civil Service Writers' Pensions, Terms of engagement of writers registered in 1870 and 1871, Difference between, as regards pension, *Apr. 30*, 945.

Fair Wages Resolution—Reading Printing Works and scale of wages, *Apr. 21*, 68, 84, 86.

Hyde Park, Condition of Ride in, *May 6*, 1592.

Pauper Children, Number of Boarded out — Distinguishing between those boarded out within and those without the Union, *Apr. 22*, 109.

Post Office.
  Reforms—Necesssity for Investigation into Grievances of all Classes of Officials, *Apr. 30*, 1062.
  Sanitary Condition of Post and Telegraph Offices, *Apr. 21*, 42.
  Savings Bank Department—Employment of Telegraph Apparatus, Subsequent to Decision regarding Employment of Telephone Service, *Apr. 23*, 211.

Treasury — Salaries of Upper Division Clerks, *Apr. 21*, 97, 99, 102.

Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 892.

Hayden, Mr. J. P. [Roscommon, S.]

Castlerea Railway Inquiry—Exclusion of Press Representatives—Admission in future proposed, *Apr. 30*, 960.

Dundrum Lunatic Asylum—Attendants' Hours—Tradesmen compelled to do duty as Attendants, Inquiry proposed, *Apr. 30*, 959; *May 1*, 1073.

Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir A. [Walsall]

Hussars, Seventh — Inadequate Number of, at Hampton Court and Hounslow —Relief of, by Employment of Household Cavalry, proposed, *Apr. 29*, 787.

Park Keepers, Position of, *Apr. 21*, 34.

Healy, Mr. T. M. [Louth, N.]

Borough Funds Bill, *May 4*, 1324.

Dunkalk Rifle Range, Employment of, by Military Authorities, *Apr. 22*, 111.

Irish Manuscripts, Translation of, Transfer of publication of manuscript alleged, grounds for—Translation of "Tigernach," *Apr. 22*, 109.

[*cont.*

Healy, Mr. T. M.—*cont.*

Louth Militia, Training of—Home Training proposed, *Apr. 22*, 111.

National School Teachers — Assistant Teacher at Kilkitt, Ireland, Non-payment of Salary, *Apr. 22*, 110.

Heaton, Mr. H. [Canterbury]

Postage — Registered Postal Packets — Compensation for lost packets, Payment of—Number and amount of claims for registered parcels lost, etc., *May 4*, 1183.

Helme, Mr. [Lancashire, Lancaster.]

Skipper's Certificate, Suggested modification of Rules for granting, *Apr. 22*, 171.

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H. [Tyrone, N.]

Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1447.

Hexham Gas Bill.

l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.

c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Hickman, Sir Alfred [Wolverhampton, W.]

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 422.

Transvaal, Employment of Foreigners by Government, Preference given to foreigners alleged—Equality of treatment proposed, *May 6*, 1506.

Historic Buildings

Establishment of National Trust for preservation of, Committee of Inquiry, proposed.

Q. Mr. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 6*, 1507.

Hobhouse, Mr. C. [Bristol, E.]

Somaliland Military Expeditions.

Cost of during last ten years, *Apr. 22*, 108.

Cost of prior to 1898, *Apr. 27*, 463.

Cost of Present Expedition up to the present, and estimated cost of further operations, *Apr. 27*, 458.

History of Previous Expeditions—Murder of Mr. Jenner in Jubaland—Tactics of the Mullah—Disadvantages of Obbia as a landing place for Troops—Importance of Somaliland to England, *Apr. 30*, 963.

Operation of British Troops outside British Somaliland without Parliamentary Sanction, *Apr. 28*, 655.

Hobhouse, Mr. Henry [Somersetshire, E.]

Agriculture, Board of, Agricultural Education, *Apr. 21*, 55.

Education Grants—Proportion of Grant accruing to date of abolition of School Board to be paid by County Council to School Board Parish, *Apr. 24*, 357.

Hobhouse, Mr. Henry—*cont.*

Local Education Authority Bye-Laws for School Attendance remain in force, *Apr. 29*, 781.

Power under Sec. 74 of Act of 1870, to make fresh, *Apr. 29*, 781.

Public Health, Vital Statistics, Uselessness of Statistics to Medical Officers as at present issued—Issue of, for Urban and Sanitary Districts, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 943.

Holland, Sir W. [Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham]

Army Expenditure, Protest against, *Apr. 23*, 289.

Taxation—Reasons in favour of the repeal of the Corn Duty—Inadequate relief to the poorer taxpayers by the Budget—Necessity for inquiry into incidence of the Income Tax—Reasons for removal of Coal Tax, *Apr. 23*, 286.

Holyrood Palace

Court and Levées, Removal of.

Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 21, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Sanitary Improvements necessary.

Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 21, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18; *May 6* 1591.

Home Industries Bill

c. 1R*. *Apr. 23*, 227.

Home Rule

see Irish Land Bill.

Hope, Mr. J. F. [Sheffield, Brightside]

Army Expenditure, Alarm caused by growing—Organisation of Auxiliaries, *Apr. 23*, 301.

Taxation—Protest against Tea and Sugar Duties — Strengthening of Sinking Fund, *Apr. 23*, 299.

Houses of Parliament Buildings

Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 35.

Hussars

Seventh Hussars—Inadequate number of, at Hampton Court and Hounslow—Relief of, by employment of Household Cavalry, proposed.

Q. Sir A. Hayter; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 787.

Hutchinson, Dr. C. F. [Sussex, Rye]

Agriculture, Board of—Co-operation of Board with the farmers, *Apr. 21*, 57.

Houses of Parliament—Lockers for Members, *Apr. 21*, 38.

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 404.

Hutton, Mr. J. [Yorkshire, Richmond]

Army Order No. 9, Limitations of—Extension, proposed, *Apr. 27*, 456.

Hyacinth, H.M.S.

Trials—Report Presented, *Apr.* 0 915, 935.

Hyde Park

Ride, Condition of the.
Observations in Com. of Supply, May 6, 1592, 1593.

Ilford

Sorting Office—Inadequacy of Sanitary Accommodation.
Q. Mr. L. Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Austen-Chamberlain, *Apr. 24,* 358.

Income Tax

Abatements, Abuses of system of—*Debate on Budget Statement, Apr. 23,* 294, 309, 313, 329.

Assessment, Method of—Defects in present system—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23,* 254. 284, 306, 313.

Incidence of Taxation—Death Duties, Effect on the proportions of Income Tax paid by the wealthy classes, *Debate on Budget Statement, Apr. 23,* 285, 286, 288, 306, 309, 314, 323, 341.

Reduction of—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23,* 252, 253, 254, 255, 260, 272, 284, 287, 308, 313, 319, 323, 325.

Select Committee, Terms of Reference—Inclusion in, of examination into practicability of graduation of the tax above the £700 limit.
Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 29,* 793.

India

Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Lord G. Hamilton.

Under Secretary—Earl Percy.

Administration—Imputations on, Lord Ampthill's deprecation of.
Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 23,* 218.

All-India Memorial to Queen Victoria—Site of, Funds, Amount contributed by Princes, Chiefs, etc.—Application of portion of fund to productive, remedial, or beneficial purposes.
Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Earl Percy, *Apr. 27,* 462.

Customs Tariff—Duties imposed on Military Band instruments of 1st Seaforth Highlanders · Grounds for Imposition—Removal of duty, etc.
Q. Mr. W. Churchill; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *May 4,* 1195.

East India.

Financial Statement—Address for, *May 5,* 1364.

Railways and Irrigation Works.
Address for Return, *Apr. 29,* 912.

Return presented, *Apr. 30,* 936.

Education, Technical and Industrial Schools, Report—Speedy issue of, rendering Return mentioned on Notice Paper unnecessary.
Q. Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; *A.* Earl Percy, *Apr. 27,* 464.

India—*cont.*

Irrigation Works, Special Grants for—Unexpended Balance.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 30,* 942.

Judges, Retiring Pensions of—Case of Sir Bhashyam Aiyanger.
Q. Mr. H. C. Richards; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 24,* 357.

Land—Irrigated Land, Revenue derived from—Acreage of Lands contributing to revenue.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 30,* 941.

Loans.

Government Advances to Native States—Amount of, Average rate of interest.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 30,* 941.

Return of Loans raised in England chargeable on the revenue of India, presented *Apr. 27*, 442.

Madras Law Students—Prohibition of, from taking part in discussions on public affairs—Sanction of Government, with regard to.
Q. Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 23,* 217.

Panna.

Death of the uncle of the Rajah—Cost of Inquiry.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 30,* 940.

Treaties between British Government and Rajah of.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 30,* 942.

Railways.

Delhi Conference.

European and Anglo-Indian Employees on Indian Railways—Proposed Increase of.
Qs. Mr. Schwann, Mr. T. Taylor; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 23,* 217.

President of,
Qs. Mr. T. Taylor, Mr. Schwann; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 23,* 217; *May 6,* 1504.

Proceedings of, Non-submission of, to Government.
Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 23,* 217.

Resolutions of, with reference to adoption of racial distinctions in appointments to Administrative Staff—Application of this policy to Railways other than State Railways—Cost of changes.
Q. Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *May 6,* 1511.

[*cont.*

India—*cont.*
  Railways—*cont.*
    Delhi Conference—*cont.*
      Sanction of Secretary of State with regard to holding of.
        Q. Mr. T. T. Taylor; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *May 6*, 1504.
      State Purchase of—Various Precedents with regard to—Appointment of Select Committee proposed.
        Q. Sir G. Bartley; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *Apr. 27*. 450.

Indiarubber, Guttapercha and Telegraph Works Company Bill
  l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.
  c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Insurance
  Government Insurances — Account Presented, *Apr. 27*, 442.

Insurance Companies
  Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1553

Insurance Premiums
  Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1553.

Intelligence Department of Board of Trade
  see Trade, Board of.

International Mercantile Marine Company
  British Flag, Use of.
    Observations in Com. Apr. 22, 156.

Ionian Islands
  Cemeteries for British Soldiers in,
    Observations in Com. Apr. 21, 40, 41.

Ipswich Gas Bill
  c. 3R.* *Apr. 21*, 1.
  l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Ireland
  Banking Statistics — Report presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.
  Borough Funds Bill, Scope of.
    Q. May 4, 1324.
  Civil Expenditure, Proposed Reduction of —Application of saving thus effected to Irish purposes.
    Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 473.
  Cork — Outdoor Postmen, Revision of duties of.
    Q. Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1504.
  Depopulation of — Enlargement of Provisions in Irish Land Bill dealing with Labourers.
    Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 23*, 212.
  Dublin, *see* that title.

Ireland—*cont.*
  Educational Conditions.
    O. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, *Apr. 29*, 831.
  Evictions, *see* that title.
  Farranes Licensing Prosecution—Conduct of Sergeant Glyn.
    Qs. Mr. Sheehan; *As.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1519.
  Galway, *see* that title.
  Irish Land Bill, *see* that title.
  Killadysert Petty Sessions—Removal of Press Reporter from Court by Police Inspector.
    Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 23*, 224; *Apr. 27*, 476.
  Labourers' Cottages, *for* Collective Heading, *see* that title.
  Land Commission, *see* that title.
  Land Question, *see* that title.
  Manuscripts, Translation of—Transfer of Publication alleged—Translation of "Tigernach."
    Q. Mr. T. H. Healy; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 22*, 109.
  Marriage Laws — *see* Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.
  National School Teachers, *see* that title.
  Poor Rate—Amount of Exchequer Issue, 1901-2, in payment of.
    Qs. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 29*, 782.
  Railway Statistics, presented, *Apr. 27*, 438
  Rate Collections — Date of, inconvenience to Agriculturists—Extension of time proposed.
    Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr.* 30, 959.
  River Bann and Lough Neagh.
    Overflowing of—Introduction of legislation for abatement of flooding.
      Qs. Mr. C. C. Craig, Mr. Wood; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May* 6, 1516.
    Pollution of, by discharge of dye stuffs and chemicals into—Obstruction of water from.
      Q. Mr. Macveagh; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 27*, 454.
  Roman Catholic University — Establishment of, by laying scheme before Commons for not less than 30 days, without bringing it before Parliament as a Bill.
    Qs. Sir G. Bartley; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 225.
  Town Holdings Committee—Re-appointment of.
    Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 29*, 796.
  Workhouse Infirmaries — Nuns employed in, Return presented [H.C.], *Apr. 21*, 5; [H.L.], *Apr. 23*, 209.
  Workmen's Trains, Necessity for.
    O. Apr. 29, 895.

Irish Land Bill
- *Debate on* 2R. [H.C.], *May 4*, 1206 ; *May 5*, 1376.
  - Administration.
    - Congested Districts Board, Membership of, 1217 ; *May 5*, 1407, 1426.
    - Estates Commissioners, Powers of, 1213, 1249 ; *May 5*, 1378, 1400.
    - O'Brien, Position of Mr. Murrough, 1218, 1282.
    - Pension Rights, 1218.
    - Salaries of Commissioners, 1216.
    - Wrench, Nomination of Mr., 1217, 1282.
  - Agriculture in Ireland, 1225, 1297 ; *May 5*, 1396, 1453.
  - Ashbourne Act, Provisions of, 1248, 1301 ; *May 5*, 1379, 1390, 1406.
  - Bogs, Sale with Estates of, *May 5*, 1425.
  - Bonus, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - Compulsion, Land Purchase under, 1215, 1258, 1278, 1286, 1291, 1304, 1319 ; *May 5*, 1410, 1464, 1469, 1493.
  - Congested Districts.
    - Bishops, Information given by, 1220.
    - Board, Resolution of, 1219 ; *May 5*, 1421.
    - Sale of Land in, 1218, 1235, 1292, 1310 ; *May 5*, 1382.
  - Consolidated Fund, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - Decadal System of Reduction, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - Demesne Lands, Sale of, 1287 ; *May 5*, 1405, 1436.
  - Dual Ownership, 1238, 1266, 1294 ; *May 5*, 1396, 1430, 1444, 1462, 1466, 1492.
  - Emigration, Effect of Bill on, 1235 ; *May 5*, 1406, 1414.
  - Estates Commissioners, Powers of, *see* Administration.
  - Evicted Tenants, Participation in Benefits by, 1213, 1229, 1306 ; *May* 5, 1382, 1395, 1426.
  - Finance.
    - Bonus, Amount and Distribution of, 1211, 1258, 1266, 1286, 1296, 1318 ; *May 5*, 1403, 1411, 1432, 1452, 1466, 1496.
    - Consolidated Fund, Management of, 1217, 1227.
    - Decadal System of Reduction, 1211, 1276, 1299, 1316.
    - Guarantee Fund, 1317 ; *May 5*, 1451.
    - Landlord, Amount received by, 1210, 1258, 1267, 1291, 1321 ; *May 5*, 1376, 1401.

Irish Land Bill—*cont.*
- *Debate on*—*cont.*
  - Finance—*cont.*
    - Minimum Price, 1210, 1272, 1307, 1322 ; *May 5*, 1377, 1393, 1410, 1459.
    - Mortgaging of Holdings, 1289 ; *May 5*, 1394, 1425, 1446.
    - Rack-Renting System, 1237, 1254, 1294.
    - Reductions, 1211, 1253, 1260, 1306 ; *May 5*, 1410.
    - Repayment, Time of, 1262, 1274, 1306 ; *May 5*, 1393.
    - Reserve, Use of, 1214.
    - Second-Term Rents as a Standard for Fixing Price, 1298, 1306 ; *May 5*, 1402, 1420, 1437, 1443, 1471.
    - Security for Loan, 1229, 1247, 1284, 1308 ; *May 5*, 1428, 1451, 1495.
    - Sinking Fund, Reduction of, 1275, 1320 ; *May 5*, 1420.
    - Taxpayers, Loan from View of, 1224, 1233, 1256, 1283, 1284, 1294, 1308, 1314 ; *May 5*, 1377, 1393, 1441, 1495.
    - Tenants, Amount paid by, 1210, 1258, 1267, 1291, 1321 ; *May 5*, 1376, 1438, 1458.
    - Third-Term Rents as a Standard for Price, 1299.
  - Freehold, Denial to Purchaser of, 1279 ; *May 5*, 1482.
  - Guarantee Fund, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - Home Rule, Connection of Land Purchase with, 1227, 1243, 1314 ; *May 5*, 1414, 1434, 1465, 1496.
  - Labourers, Clauses concerning, 1221, 1280, 1310 ; *May 5*, 1413, 1422, 1436, 1461, 1464.
  - Land Commission, Rent-fixing Powers of, 1278, 1295, 1322 ; *May 5*, 1423, 1444, 1495.
  - Land Conference Report, 1208, 1316 ; *May 5*, 1378, 1421, 1430, 1493.
  - Land Law Portions of the Bill, 1281.
  - Land Purchase Policy.
    - History of Previous Measures, 1243, 1257, 1277, 1293, 1301 ; *May 5*, 1387, 1415, 1448.
    - Liberal Party, 1206 ; *May 5*, 1376, 1386, 1401.
    - Unionist Party, 1206, 1228, 1250, 1257, 1364 ; *May 5*, 1388, 1401, 1492.
  - Minimum Price, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - Mortgaging of Holdings, *see* sub-heading Finance.
  - National Convention, 1208, 1305 ; *May 5*, 1379, 1443.

[*cont.*

Irish Land Bill—*cont.*
Debate on—cont.
Poor Holdings, 1210, 1235; *May 5*, 1399.
Rack-renting System, *see* sub-heading Finance.
Riparian Rights on Farms, *May 5*, 1422, 1445.
Second-Term Rents, *see* sub-heading Finance.
Security for Loans, *see* sub-heading Finance.
Taxpayers, *see* sub-heading Finance.
Third-Term Rents, *see* sub-heading Finance.
Estates in English Court of Chancery—Provision for in Bill—Case of Marquess of Ely's Estate.
Qs. Mr. E. Mitchell, Mr. T. W. Russell; *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 794.
Future Tenants—Inclusion of in Clause 1.
Q. Mr. Channing; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 783.
Holdings—Number to which Bill Applies.
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 794.
References to Sections of other Statutes—Publishing and Circulation of, for Convenience of Members.
Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 473.
Second-Term Rents to be dealt with by Bill—Method of Calculation.
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 794.
Tenants—Principle of Selection of, to Share Reductions of Payment.
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1201.
Town Parks—Inclusion of, in Bill, proposed.
Q. Mr. E. Mitchell; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1201.

Irish Valuation Acts
Select Committee — Appointment of, ordered, to Report on Desirable Changes, *Apr. 27*, 591.

Jacoby, Mr. J. A. [Derbyshire, Mid]
Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists—Return of Promotions, Bringing up to date of Returns, *Apr. 27*, 452.

Japan
Kobé Medical Practice—Case of Mr. S. T. Knaggs, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 656.

Jenner, Mr.
see Somaliland.

Jewish Colonisation Association Bill
l. 2R.* *Apr. 28*, 593.
Com.* *May 5*, 1325.

Jones, Mr. Brynmor [Swansea District]
Crown Lands in Wales, *Apr. 29*, 900.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1106.

Jones, Mr. William [Carnarvonshire, Arfon]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 497.

Joyce, Mr. M. [Limerick]
Army Pensions, Increase of.
Duke, Henry, Case of, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Stapleton, John, Case of, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Bovine Tuberculosis—Cost of Commissions—Report of Commission, date of—Compensation to owners, *Apr. 29*, 791.
Irish Live Stock, Cross Channel Transit of—Regulations, Number of prosecutions for violation of—Survey of vessels, complaints with regard to, etc., *May 6*, 1513.
Limerick—Seamen Landing at, Appointment of Board of Trade Official to look after interests of, *Apr. 27*, 478.
Roache, J., Case of—Appeal for commutation of sentence—Suspension of sentence proposed, *Apr. 29*, 786.

Kearley, Mr. H. E. [Devonport]
Birdcage Walk, Condition of Roadway in, *Apr. 21*, 33.
Expenditure—Necessity for reduction in Administrative Departments, *Apr. 23*, 336.
Hampton Court Palace, Vandalism at, *Apr. 21*, 21, 24.
Naval Plumbers—Permission for Transfer to rating of Electricians, *Apr. 23*, 211.
Osborne House, Expenditure on—Naval and Military uses, *Apr. 21*, 27.

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John [Devonshire, Honiton]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1087.

Kensington Gardens
Abolition as an Open Space of part of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 21*, 31, 32, 33.

Kenyon, Mr. G. [Denbigh]
Schools, Transfer of—Power of Transfer in Hands of School Managers, *Apr. 27*, 449.

Kenyon-Slaney Amendment
see London Education Bill.

Kilkenny
Thomastown School, Lottery at—Policy of Executive in Ireland with regard to Lotteries held for Charitable Objects.
Q. Mr. Mansfield; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 28*, 647.

Kinloch, Colonel—Case of
Army Acts, Provisions and Observations of the.
Os. May 4, 142, 1154, 1155, 1158.
Commander-in-Chief, Position and Authority of.
Os. May 4, 1147, 1149, 1161, 1168, 1172, 1176.
Court of Inquiry, alleged Irregularity of.
Os. May 4, 1142, 1150, 1159, 1170, 1172.
Observations in Debate on Military Law and Procedure [H.L.], *Apr. 28*, 611.
Royal Warrant, Exercise of the.
Os. May 4, 1146, 1159, 1173.

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.
c. 1R.* *May 5*, 1364.
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 4*, 1138.

Knowles, Mr. Lees [Salford, W.]
Taxation—Repeal of Corn Duty—Reduction of Income Tax, *Apr. 23*, 325.

Labour
Board of Trade Labour Department—Changes in rates of wages, Hours of Labour, etc.—Report and Statistical Table, Presented, *Apr. 27*, 439.

Labourers' Cottages, Ireland
Cottages, Erection of—Number of cases in which compulsory powers were or were not sought in putting Acts into force.
Q. Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1374.

Lambert, Mr. G. [Devonshire, South Molton]
Agriculture—Condition of Agricultural Education—Rural Wages—Poverty of the Agricultural Department—Suppression of Swine Fever—Export of stock to South Africa, etc., *Apr. 21*, 45.
Agricultural Rates Act, Amount of Exchequer Grants under, issued to England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, *Apr. 21*, 7.
Imperial Revenue—Amount of English, Scotch, and Irish contributions to, respectively, *Apr. 21*, 6.
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1401.
Holdings—Number of, to which Bill applies, *Apr. 29*, 795.
Second Term Rents to be dealt with by Bill—Method of Calculation, *Apr. 29*, 794.
Tenants—Principle of Selection of, to share reductions of payment, *May 4*, 1201.
Law Officers of the Crown—Opportunity for Discussion of conduct of, with regard to Prosecution of Mr. Whitaker Wright, *May 4*, 1204.
Poor Rate, Ireland—Amount of Exchequer issue in payment of, *Apr. 29*, 782.

Lambton, Mr. F. W. [Durham, S.E.]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 563.

Lamington, Lord
Motor Cars—Regulations as to, *Apr. 30*, 926.
Persian Gulf, Position of Great Britain in—Russian Policy with regard to Persia—Advancement of Loans—Establishment of Bank—Attempt to secure a Naval Base in Persian Gulf—Grant of Additional Loan—Entrance into Commercial Treaty with Persia—Appointment of Belgian Customs House Officials in Gulf Ports, *May 5*, 1329–1339.

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway Order Confirmation Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 30*, 933.
*con.** *May 4*, 1178.
3R.* *May 6*, 1497.

Land Commission, Ireland
Proceedings—Return Presented, *Apr. 21*, 4; *Apr. 27*, 439.

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill
c. 2R.* *Apr. 24*, 354.
*Com.** *Apr. 24*, 354.

Land Purchase Policy
see Irish Land Bill.

Land Question, Ireland
Labourers' (Ireland) Acts—Protest of Sligo Rural District Council against Value placed by Local Government Arbitrator on Land sought to be acquired for purposes of Labourers' Acts.
Q. Mr. O'Dowd; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1202.
Land Purchase Acts.
Default of Payment.
Amount per Year, from Grants-in-Aid of Local Taxation on Account of—Repayment to Guarantee Fund.
Q. Sir J. Colomb; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 28*, 649.
Proceedings for, by Land Commissioners—Number of Cases—Amount drawn from Guarantee Fund in respect of Holdings Sold.
Q. Mr. Channing; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 783.
Recovery of Instalments of Annuities under.
Q. Mr. G. Faber; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 27*, 455.
Unexpended Funds under.
Q. Mr. Goulding; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1188.
Land Purchase (Guarantee Fund)—Return of Payments to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account, etc., presented, *Apr. 30*, 938.

Land Registers (Scotland) Bill
Amendt. [H.C.] *May 5*, 1328.
Committee, Motion for referring Bill to—*Apr. 30*, 918.

Land Registry Office
Vote for.
Observations in Com. Apr. 21, 42.

Langley, Mr. Batty [Sheffield, Attercliffe]
Taxation—Disapproval of the Corn Tax, *Apr. 23*, 327.

Lansdowne, Marquess of—*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.*
Bagdad Railway — Communications between Company Promoters and H.M. Government—Possible termini of Railway—*May 5*, 1345.
Manchuria, Evacuation of, *May 1*, 1067.
Russian Negotiations with China —*Apr. 28*, 639, *Apr. 30*, 917.
Statement of Russian Ambassador—*May 1*, 1067.
Persian Gulf—Position of Great Britain in, Statement with regard to British Policy — Commercial relations — Position with regard to Railway Construction—Consular Service, *May 5*, 1343.
Somaliland Military Expedition—Latest information with regard to, *Apr. 28*, 638.

Laurie, Lieut.-Gen. J. W. [Pembroke, Haverfordwest]
Cemeteries—Maintenance of, abroad—*Apr. 21*, 41.
Motor Cars—Speed Regulations—Proceedings against Omnibus Drivers for driving at excess speed—Instructions to Police to take similar measures against Motor Car Drivers, *Apr. 27*, 470.
Royal Garrison Regiment—Inclusion of Battalions stationed at Malta, in Return, *Apr. 29*, 784.
Somaliland Military Expedition—Mullah's Supply of Munitions—Channel through which obtained, *Apr. 29*, 788.
South African War Medal—Delay in award of, to 30th Pembroke Yeomanry, *Apr. 27*, 457.

Law Officers of the Crown
Prosecution of Mr. Whitaker Wright—Discussion of conduct of Law Officers with regard to
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 4*, 1204.

Lawson, Mr. J. Grant—*Secretary to the Local Government Board* [Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk]
Glycerinated Calf Lymph—Terms of Government supply to medical practitioners in private practice, *Apr. 30*, 956.

Lawson, Mr. J. Grant—*cont.*
National Vaccine Establishment—Details of expenditure, *Apr. 30*, 956.
Sewage Disposal—Adoption of Recommendations of Royal Commission, *May 4*, 1198.

Lawson, Sir Wilfrid [Cornwall, Camborne]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 394.

Lee, Mr. Arthur [Hants, Fareham]
Bullets in use by British Army—Bullets necessary in order to disable Savages, *Apr. 30*, 992.
Service Bullet—Alleged inefficacy of, in Somaliland Campaign—General Manning's despatch, *Apr. 27*, 461.

Leese, Sir J. [Lancashire, Accrington]
Bagdad Railway Convention—Article IV. —Reference to Financial situation in, *Apr. 23*, 213.
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1453.
Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1083.
Somaliland Expedition—Interests of Italy threatened by the Mullah's attacks, *Apr. 30*, 985.

Legal Buildings (Miscellaneous)
Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 40.

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage [St. George's, Hanover Square]
Dogs—Lost dogs sold by auction by the Police—Amount realised by sale in relation to cost of keep of dogs. *May 4*, 1187,

Leng, Sir J. [Dundee]
New Naval Base on the Forth—Acquisition of Land for erection of houses for employees—Erection of town on plan of Garden Cities, proposed, *May 6*, 1508.
Scottish Board of Manufacturers—Report of Committee on Administration of Grants in Aid of Art—Date of Presentation, *Apr. 29*, 793.
Somaliland Military Expedition—Wireless Telegraphy—Employment of marine instruments—Substitution of, for apparatus adapted to overland use, proposed — Employment of experts, *Apr. 30*, 947.

Leveson-Gower, Mr.
see Military Law and Procedure.

Lewis, Mr. J. H. [Flint Boroughs]
Budget Resolutions—Printing of, for information of Committee prior to discussion, *May 6*, 1581.
Crown Lands in Wales, *Apr. 29*, 908.

Licensing
Worcestershire Licensing Committee — Decision of with regard to Upton-on-Severn and Shipston-on-Stour—Reinstatement of towns proposed.
Q. Colonel Long; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 30*, 954.

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill
c. 2R. *Apr. 24*, 431.
Debates on,
Amount of Compensation, *Apr. 24*, 362, 376, 390, 391, 413.
Appeals pending from Brewster Sessions to Quarter Sessions, *Apr. 24*, 411.
Fund to provide Compensation, *Apr. 24*, 362, 376, 390, 398, 413, 418.
Magistrates' power to abolish licences, *Apr. 24*, 363, 369, 370, 388, 389, 390, 392, 396, 401, 415, 418, 421, 425, 428.
Majority Report of the Committee, *Apr. 24*, 360, 380, 385, 396.
Minority Report of the Committee, *Apr. 24*, 360, 385, 390, 396.
Number of Public Houses, Effect of Bill on, *Apr. 24*, 366, 367, 381, 383.
Quarter Sessions, Appeals to, *Apr. 24*, 371, 383, 386, 396, 410, 411.
Trade, Provision of Compensation by the, *Apr. 24*, 362, 374, 390, 414, 418, 422, 424, 427.

Life Association of Scotland Bill
l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.
c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Life Assurance Companies
Statement of Accounts, etc., presented, *Apr. 27*, 441, 448.

Lighthouse Fund
Administration of.
Observations in Com., Apr. 22, 164, 167.

Light Railways
see Railways.

Light Ships
Communication with Shore.
Observations in Com., Apr. 22, 151, 155, 164, 165.

Lights, Lighthouses and Lightships
Ireland.
Lights Commission—Steps to bring Work of within scope of Parliamentary Control.
Q. Mr. H. C. Richards; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 23*, 212.
Rock Angus Lighthouse, Repair of—Consideration of placing light in lighthouse.
Q. Mr. T. L. Corbett; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 479.
Light Dues—Proposed reduction of.
Q. Sir A. Rollit; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 648.
Wireless Telegraphy for British Light Vessels—Delay in provision of.
Qs. Major Seely; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 657.

Lima Railways Bill
l. 3R.* *Apr. 27*, 434.
c. 1R.* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Limerick
Seamen landing at — Appointment of Board of Trade Official to look after interests of.
Q. Mr. Joyce; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 478.

Liquor Traffic
Intoxicating Liquors—Licences Refused, Return Presented, *May 4*, 1181.

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill
Debate on Second Reading [H.C.], *May 1*, 1133.

Listowel
Poor Law Union—Consideration of Auditors' Report.
Q. Colonel M'Calmont; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1368.

Liverpool University Bill
l. 2R.* *May 1*, 1066.
Com. *May 5*, 1325.

Llewellyn, Mr. E. H. [Somerset, N.]
Great Western Railway Bill, *Apr. 21*, 77.

Lloyd-George, Mr. D. [Carnarvon]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 566.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 844.
Somaliland Expedition—Failure of the previous expedition—Increase of the Mullah's power, *Apr. 30*, 1008.

Loans
India, *see* that title.

Local Government Board
President—Rt. Hon. W. H. Long.
Parliamentary Secretary—Mr. J. Grant Lawson.

Local Government Board (Ireland)
Four Orders Presented, *May 4*, 1141, 1182.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 444.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
c. Rep.* *May 4*, 1179.
con. *May 5*, 1358.
3R.* *May 6*, 1497.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
c. 2R.* *Com. Apr. 27*, 445.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill
c. 2R.* *Com.* *Apr. 28*, 641.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 30*, 932, 933.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 6*, 1497.
1R.* *May 6*, 1498.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 6*, 1497.
1R.* *May 6*, 1498.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 6*, 1497.
1R.* *May 6*, 1498.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 1*, 1068.
1R.* *May 1*, 1068.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 445.
3R.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 445.
3R.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 445.
3R.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill
c. 2R.* *Com.* *Apr. 28*, 641.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 30*, 932.
1R.* *Apr. 30*, 933.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 30*, 933.
1R.* *Apr. 30*. 933.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 5*, 1358.
1R.* *May 5*, 1359.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 5*, 1358.
1R.* *May 5*, 1359.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 5*, 1358.
1R.* *May 5*, 1359.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill
c. Ordered, *May 5*, 1358.
1R.* *May 5*, 1359.

Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 445.
3R.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 30*, 914.

Lochnell Estate Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1137.

Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. [Essex, Epping]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 697.

Logan, Mr. J. W. [Leicestershire, Harborough]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 426.

London
Underground Railways, *see* Railways.

London and North-Western Railway
Carriage of Goods, Arrangements for—Questionable practices with regard to,
Q. Mr. A. Davies. *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 453; *Apr. 29*, 792.

London and South-Western Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

London County Council
Proposed Vehicular By-Law. Uncertainty with regard to class of vehicles to which law would apply, etc., Deputation of carrying agents proposed.
Q. Mr. Causton. *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 27*, 471.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 28*, 641.
*con.** *May 4*, 1178.

London County Council (Money) Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 21*, 2.
1R.* *Apr. 22*, 105.
2R.* *Com. May 4*, 1178.

Londonderry
Emigrants—Treatment of, by Collector of Customs.
Q. Mr. O'Doherty; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 5*, 1373.

London Education Bill
c. 2R. *Apr. 29*, 873.
Debate [H.C.].
Ad hoc Body, Question of an, *Apr. 28*, 667, 687, 689, 692, 697, 713, 725, 734, 742, 747, 753, 759; *Apr. 29*, 799, 826, 845, 858, 868.

[*cont.*

London Education Bill—*cont.*
Debate—cont.
Borough Councils, Position of, *Apr. 28*, 666, 681, 693, 702, 704, 716, 720, 729, 736, 737, 744, 749, 758, 765; *Apr. 29*, 803, 810, 828, 836, 844, 852, 856, 862.
Clauses by reference, *Apr. 28*, 664, 728.
County Council, Position of, *Apr. 28*, 666, 694, 700, 704, 713, 727, 758; *Apr. 29*, 819.
Direct Election, *Apr. 28*, 669.
Election, Principles of, *Apr. 28*, 670, 687, 695, 699, 733, 742, 754, 759, 761.
Elementary Schools, Management of, *Apr. 28*, 673, 699, 712, 716; *Apr. 29*, 820, 852.
Evening Schools, Management of, *Apr. 28*, 673.
Irish School Children, Difficulties of, *Apr. 29*, 831.
Jewish Board Schools, Management of, *Apr. 29*, 834, 845.
Kenyon-Slaney Amendment, *Apr. 29*, 846.
Local Authorities, Financial Power of, *Apr. 28*, 664, 699, 714, 735, 749, 773; *Apr. 29*, 823, 852.
London County Council, Control of, *Apr. 28*, 675, 682, 693, 698, 707, 714, 730, 733, 740, 744, 750, 752, 763, 765; *Apr. 29*, 799, 813, 827, 837, 844, 851, 854, 863.
London School Board, Work of, *Apr. 28*, 668, 679, 680, 690, 698, 706, 725, 732, 734, 741, 753, 758, 761; *Apr. 29*, 800, 812, 827, 849, 851, 869.
Municipal Bodies, Authority of—*Apr. 28*, 666, 678, 697, 714, 749, 770; *Apr. 29*, 818, 843, 861.
Ratepayers, Representation of—*Apr. 28*, 671, 678, 695, 709, 714, 741, 750, 760; *Apr. 29*, 809.
Religious Difficulties, *Apr. 28*, 732, 749, 760, 773, 774; *Apr. 29*, 431, 845, 850.
Roman Catholics, Education of—*Apr. 29*, 831, 850.
Statutory Committee, majority on—*Apr. 28*, 676.
Teachers, Appointment of, *Apr. 28*, 718, 737, 741, 745, 765; *Apr. 29*, 822.
Technical Education Board, Work of, *Apr. 28*, 708, 735; *Apr. 29*, 837.
University of London—Influence on education and relations with the Educational Authority, *Apr. 29*, 839.
Voluntary Schools, Aid given to, *Apr. 28*, 664; *Apr. 29*, 813, 834.

London Education Bill—*cont.*
Debate—cont.
Wales, Religious Instruction in, *Apr. 29*, 847.
Water Board, Comparison with, *Apr. 28*, 673, 701; *Apr. 29*, 800, 829.
Women, Provision for, *Apr. 28*, 731, 735, 745, 768; *Apr. 29*, 820, 841, 857, 864.
Exchequer, Charge on, Additional burden thrown on ratepayers.
Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Apr. 28*, 659.
Second Reading, Proposed Postponement of.
Q. Dr. Macnamara; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 23*, 226.

London Hydraulic Power Bill
c. con. Apr. 21*, 1.
3R.* *Apr. 24*, 353.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

London, Tilbury and Southend Railway Bill
c. Rep.* *May 4*, 1179.

London United Tramways Bill
c. Rep.* *May 5*, 1360.

Long, Colonel C. W. [Worcestershire, Evesham]
Worcestershire Licensing Committee, Decision of, with regard to Upton-on-Severn and Shipston-on-Stour, Reinstatement of towns proposed, *Apr. 30*, 954.

Long, Rt. Hon. Walter H.—*President of the Local Government Board* [Bristol, S.]
Bovine Tuberculosis, Commission on, cost of—Report of Commission, date of issue, Compensation to owners, *Apr. 29*, 791.
Casual Paupers, System of early discharge of—in vogue at the Manchester and Salford Mission Casual Ward and Labour Yard, Adoption in Union Workhouses, *Apr. 27*, 468.
Education Grants, Amount payable by County Councils under provisions of Education Act, 1892, to school board parishes in respect of former board schools, *Apr. 24*, 357.
Glycerinated Calf Lymph.
Contribution of Local Government Board of Scotland, in payment for Government Supply, *May 6*, 1515.
Output by Local Government Board, *May 4*, 1186.
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 403.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 858.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1128.

[*cont.*

Long, Rt. Hon. Walter H.—*cont.*
  Medical Officers, England and Wales—Counties in which Officers are Appointed, Number of—Cases in which Whole Time is Devoted to Duties of Office, *Apr. 27*, 469.
  Motor Cars.
    Identification Numbers to be Affixed in order to Faciliate Identification—Consideration of proposal, *May 5*, 1371.
    Licence, Imposition of — Heavy Penalty for Breach of Law as to Speed—Consideration of proposals, *May 5*, 1364.
    Speed Regulations—Proposed Removal of Present Limit—Registration of Cars — Penalty for Breach of Law as to Speed, *May 5*, 1371.
    Wantage Motor Car Fatality—Verdict of "Accidental Death"—Exoneration of Driver—No Enquiry other than that of Coroner held, *Apr. 27*, 488.
  Pauper Children.
    Boarded out Children—Number of, Distinguishing between those Boarded Out Within and those Without the Union, *Apr. 22*, 109.
    Number of, in Metropolitan Poor Law Institutions, *Apr. 27*, 451.
    Ophthalmia and Ringworm, Number of Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Schools Suffering from, *May 1*, 1074.
    Poplar Vaccination Registers, Report of Committee of Poplar Guardians with respect to Entries in, *Apr. 27*, 452.
    Public Health—Vital Statistics, Uselessness of Statistics to Medical Officers as at present issued—Proposed issue of, for Urban and Sanitary Districts, *Apr. 30*, 943.
    Smallpox—Private Establishments for Patients in County of London area—Number of, Inspection, etc., *May 4*, 1186.

Lonsdale, Mr. J. [Armagh, Mid.]
  Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1408.
  Morocco, Condition of—British residents in Tetuan, protection of, *May 4*, 1197.

Lough, Mr. T. [Islington, W.]
  Budget—Number of Resolutions required, *Apr. 23*, 338, 352.
  Customs Department Employees — Increase in number of since introduction of sugar and corn duties, *Apr. 22*, 112.
  Grand National Steeplechase—Cruelty to horses, Steps for prevention of, *Apr. 27*, 450.

Lough, Mr. T.—*cont.*
  London Education Bill.
    Apr. 28, 727.
    Charge on Exchequer — Additional burden on ratepayers, *Apr. 28*, 659.
  Post Office Reforms — Re-purchase of stamps, *Apr. 30*, 1064.
  Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1586.
  Sugar Convention, Brussels — Invert Sugar, Manufactories of—Necessity of placing in Bond, *May 6*, 1502.
  Sugar Refineries—Necessity of placing in Bond—Cost of supervising, *Apr. 22*, 113.
  Taxation—Motion for the reduction of Tea Duty—Relief for indirect taxpayers, *Apr. 23*, 345.
  Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 899.

Lowther, Mr. Claude [Cumberland, Eskdale]
  South African Loan, *May 6*, 1554.

Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. W.—*Chairman of Committee of Ways and Means.* [Kent, Thanet]
  Discussion of matters requiring legislation, *Apr. 22*, 161.
  Harbours, Grant-in-aid for, *Apr. 22*, 181.
  Kensington Gardens, extent of, *Apr. 21*, 33.
  Propriety of discussing the policy of any undertaking promoted by the Government on Estimates providing only for part of the cost of the undertaking, *Apr. 30*, 963.
  Reduction of Vote, Question of, *Apr. 21*, 84.

Lowther, Mr. James [Kent, Thanet]
  Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 534.

Lucas, Mr. R. [Portsmouth]
  Dockyards, Storehouse Staff--Reorganisation of, under consideration, *Apr. 22*, 109.
  Library in Houses of Parliament—Ventilation of, *Apr. 21*, 35.
  Seamen killed on Service in Time of Peace—Pensions for Widows of, *Apr. 27*, 454.

Lunatics and Lunatic Asylums
  Dundrum Asylum.
    Attendants' Hours—Tradesmen compelled to do duty as Attendants, Inquiry proposed.
      Qs. Mr. Hayden; *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 30*, 959, *May 1*, 1073.
    Re-arrest of Escaped Criminal Lunatics—Case of Sheehan.
      Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1187.

[*cont.*

Lunatics and Lunatic Asylums—*cont.*
Dundrum Asylum—*cont.*
Sligo Asylum, Report of Inspectors on Condition of—Resolution with regard to provision of accommodation for excess patients.
Q. Mr. Tully ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1375.
Soldiers in County Asylums — Case of Private Bowers.
Q. Mr. F. Wilson ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 4*, 1189.

Lyttelton, Mr. A. [Warwick and Leamington]
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 530.

M'Arthur, Mr. C. [Liverpool, Exchange]
"Princess Alexandra," Accident to–Officer in charge at time of accident, Rank and Certificate of, Cost of Repairs, etc., *Apr. 30*, 943.

M'Calmont, Colonel J. [Antrim, E.]
Listowel Poor Law Union, Report of Auditor with regard to, Consideration of, *May 5*, 1368.

Macdona, Mr. J. C. [Southwark, Rotherhithe]
Houses of Parliament—Strangers' Smoking Room, *Apr 21*, 36.

Macdonald, Late Sir Hector
Ceylon Coronation Parade, Inspection and review of, entrusted to—Action of Governor-General of Ceylon independent of Colonial Office.
Q. Mr. Weir ; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 28*, 654.

Macedonia
Reform Scheme—Information with regard to execution of promised reforms
Q. Mr. Stevenson ; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 27*, 465.

McKenna, Mr. R. [Monmouth, N.]
National Debt and Sinking Fund—Proposed use of Surplus Revenue, *Apr. 23*, 278.
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1568.
Taxation — Burden of the Working Classes—Fluctuations in the Price of Household Articles, *Apr. 23*, 281.

Macnamara, Dr. [Camberwell, N.]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 677.
Proposed Postponement of Second Reading, *Apr. 23*, 226.

Macveagh, Mr. [Down, S.]
Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill, *Apr. 30*, 1030.
River Bann and Tributaries—Pollution of, by Discharge of Dye Stuffs and Chemicals—Abstraction of Water from —Investigation proposed, *Apr. 27*, 454.

Magherafelt Disturbances
Police.
Action of, on occasion of—Full Investigation.
Qs. Mr. Sloan, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. Gordon ; *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 474.
Treatment of, by Mob,
Q. Mr. Redmond ; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 29*, 793.

Maidstone Gas Bill
*c. con.** *Apr. 21*, 1.
3R.* *Apr. 24*, 353.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Magistrates and Justices of the Peace
Ireland.
Beckett, Mr. Jacob ; Date of Appointment—Attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions since Appointment, Qualification for Voting at Election of Petty Sessions Clerk.
Q. Mr. O'Kelly ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1518.
Heraghty, Mr.—Number of Attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions up to 25th February, 1903.
Q. Mr. O'Kelly ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1518.
Resident Magistrates—Names, Qualifications, Religion of Magistrates appointed during last Twelve Months.
Q. Mr. Wood ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1517.

Malcolm, Mr. I. Z. [Suffolk, Stowmarket]
Africa—Concessions in East, Grant of Return relative to, *Apr. 27*, 464.
Houses of Parliament—Accommodation in the House — Improvements in Telegraph Office and Smoking Room, *Apr. 21*, 36.
Royal Commissions and Select Committees, Cost of, since year 1892, *Apr. 27*, 479.
Somaliland Expedition—Use of the Military Promenades — Justification for War on Italian Territory—Importance of British Supremacy in Somaliland, *Apr. 30*, 986.

Manchuria
Evacuation of—Statement, Marquess of Lansdowne, *May 1*, 1067.

Mansfield, Mr. H. [Lincolnshire, Spalding]
Agriculture, Board of—Sheep Worrying—Horse-breeding for the Army, Investigations in "phoma," *Apr. 21*, 51.
Imperial Yeomanry—Pay, Arrears of—Case of late Captain Mackenzie, Norfolk Regiment, *Apr. 28*, 653.
Soldiers, Employment of Discharged—Increase of Beggars in Holland Division of Lincolnshire due to Discharged Soldiers out of Work, alleged—Provision of Employment for such cases, *Apr. 28*, 653.

[*cont.*

Mansfield, Mr. H.—*cont.*
Thomastown School, Kilkenny Lottery at, Policy of Executive in Ireland with regard to Lotteries held for Charitable Objects, *Apr. 28*, 647.

Market Drayton Gas Bill
c. 3R.* *Apr. 21*, 1.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Markham, Mr. [Nottinghamshire, Mansfield]
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1574.

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
Debate on Second Reading, [H.C.] *May 1*, 1074.
Colonies, Similar Legislation in, 1077, 1083, 1093, 1110, 1117.
Consanguinity, Laws of, 1088, 1111.
Dispensations, History of, 1088, 1103.
History of Bill, 1074.
Ireland, Marriage Laws in, 1102.
Marriage Laws, History of our, 1082, 1088, 1102, 1107, 1115, 1116.
Petitions presented, 1076, 1095.
Property, Marriage Laws affecting inheritance of, 1084.
Religious opinion, 1076, 1084. 1092, 1094, 1097, 1099, 1101, 1118.
Scotland, Marriage Laws in, 1094, 1102.
Sister-in-law, Position of the, 1091, 1095, 1099, 1117.
United States, Marriage Laws in, 1078, 1104.
Women, Attitude of, 1085, 1100.
Working Classes, opinion and position of, 1079, 1094, 1102, 1114, 1115.
Standing Committee, Referring Bill to, 1122 - 1130.

Meat Contracts for the Army
Colonial interests—Delay in sending terms for contracts to Australia and New Zealand—Greater expedition proposed.
Q. Mr. Bill; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 948.

Medals and Gratuities
South African War — 30th Pembroke Yeomanry—Delay in award of War Medal.
Q. General Laurie; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 457.

Medical Officers.
England and Wales—Counties in which officers are appointed, Number of—Cases in which whole time is devoted to duties of office.
Q. Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. W. Long. *Apr. 27*, 469.
Ireland — Poor Law Medical Officers, Position of — Inclusion of Question within the scope of Royal Commission inquiring into amalgamation of Irish Unions.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1202.

Merchant Shipping
Legislation — Extension of Legislation applicable to British shipping trading to ports in United Kingdom to foreign-owned vessels—Committee of Inquiry proposed.
Q. Mr. Harris; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour. *Apr. 23*, 223.
Loading Port Clause in Ships, Articles of Agreement, Board of Trade circular with regard to—Decision in Thames Police Court—Withdrawal of circular proposed.
Q. Lord Muskerry; *A.* Lord Wolverton. *May 5*, 1354.

Members of Parliament
Housing Accommodation at Westminster —Difficulties of obtaining—Provision of accommodation by Government suggested.
Q. Mr. Broadhurst; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 4*, 1203.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill
l. 3R.* *May 1*, 1066.
c. 1R.* *May 4*, 1180.

Metropolitan Police
Pension Funds, Accounts presented, *Apr. 29*, 778; *Apr. 30*, 916.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill
c. Ordered, *Apr. 22*, 105.
1R.* *Apr. 22*, 105.
2R.* *Com. May 1*, 1068.

Metropolitan Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. [Staffordshire, Handsworth]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1397.

Middlemore, Mr. J. T. [Birmingham, N.]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 757.

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill
Committee, Motion for referring Bill to, *Apr. 30*, 1030.
Irish Railways—Motion for Management by English Companies, *Apr. 30*, 1030.

Midland Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

Midland Railway Bill
c. con. Apr. 21*, 1.
3R.* *Apr. 24*, 353.
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
2R.* *Com.* May 5*, 1326.

Midwives' Board
Meetings of—Issue of minutes of meetings —Date of.
Q. Sir W. Foster; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *May 6*, 1507.

Milford Docks Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 4*, 1138.
c. 1R.* *May 5*, 1361.

Military Lands Bill
c. 1R.* *May 6*, 1521.

Military Law and Procedure
Debate [H.L.], *Apr. 28*, 611.
Army Act—Provisions of the, *Apr. 28*, 611, 627, 633.
Court-Martial Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 613.
Court of Inquiry, Conduct of a, *Apr. 28*, 616, 628, 631, 634.
Kinloch, Case of Colonel, *Apr. 28*, 611, 626, 631, 632, 633, 637, 638.
Leveson-Gower, Mr. — Circumstances of his resignation, *Apr. 28*, 614, 627.
Roberts, Earl—Action with regard to Colonel Kinloch, *Apr. 28*, 611, 627, 631, 633, 637, 638.

Militia
Louth Militia—Training of, Home Training proposed.
Q. Mr. T. M. Healey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 22*, 111.
Officers, South African War—Recognition of Services.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 783; *May 6*, 1505.

Milk
Rates for Carriage of.
Os. Sir Edward Strachey, *Apr. 21*, 71, 74; Mr. Llewellyn, 77; Mr. Courtenay Warner, 82.

Milner, Lord—*High Commissioner of South Africa.*
Policy with regard to the Transvaal, *see* South African Loan.

Milvain, Mr. T. [Hampstead]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 724.

"Minerva," H.M.S.
Trials—Report Presented, *Apr. 30*, 915, 935.

Mines
Wages and Profits in Coal Mining—Copy of Tables Ordered, *May 5*, 1364.

Mitchell, Mr. E. [Fermanagh, N.]
Irish Land Bill—Estates in English Court of Chancery—Provision for in Bill—Case of Marquis of Ely's Estate, *Apr. 29*, 794.

Morgan Combine
Constitution of.
Observations in Com. of Supply, *Apr. 22*, 164, 165.

Morgan, Mr. J. L. [Carmarthenshire, W.]
Agriculture, Board of—Contact of Farmers with Board—Muzzling Order in Carmarthenshire, *Apr. 21*, 53.

Morgan, Mr. J. Pierpont
International Mercantile Marine Company—Control of English Shipping, *see* International Mercantile Marine Company.

Morocco
Condition of—British Residents in Tetuan, Protection of.
Qs. Mr. Lonsdale; *As.* Lord Cranborne, *May 4*, 1197.

Morton, Mr. A. [Deptford]
Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1607.

Mosely Mission
Reports, Arrangements for Publication of.
Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *May 4*, 1183.

Motor Cars
Accidents, Return of, in which injury was caused to person or property of public, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 926.
Drivers to hold Certificate of Efficiency, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 927.
Identification—Compelling Motor Cars to bear number, etc., *Apr. 30*, 927.
Provisions for, in forthcoming Bill.
Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 5*, 1317.
Speed Regulations, Imposition of penalty for breach of law—Imposition of licence—Consideration of, in forthcoming Bill.
Q. Mr. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 5*, 1364.
Proceedings against omnibus driver for driving at excess speed—Instructions to police to take similar measures against motor car drivers.
Qs. General Laurie; *As.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 27*, 470.
Removal of present limit, Registration of cars, Imposition of fine for breach of law, proposed.
Q. Mr. J. Ellis; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 5*, 1371.
Wantage Motor Car Fatality—Return of "Accidental Death," Exoneration of driver—No inquiry other than that of Coroner held.
Q. Mr. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Moulton, Mr. J. F. [Cornwall, Launceston]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1478.

Mountmellick
Mail Service—Delay in delivery of mails.
Q. Mr. Delany. *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 961.

Mullah, The Mad
see Somaliland.

Municipal Election Petition
Borough of Shrewsbury—Report Presented *Apr. 27*, 438.

Municipal Trading
Committee—Appointment of Select Committee, *Apr. 27*, 435; *May 5*, 1361.

Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G.—*Lord Advocate* [Buteshire]
Avoch (Ross-shire) Harbour—Grant-in-aid for construction of, Amount of, *May 6*, 1515.
Board of Manufactures in Scotland—Report of Committee on Administration of Grants-in-aid of Art, *Apr. 29*, 793.
Continuation Classes in Crofting Counties, Grants for, Number of schools receiving grants, amount paid, *Apr. 28*, 646.
Education, Scotland, Leaving Certificates—Alteration of regulations inexpedient, *Apr. 23*, 210.
Greenock School Board Election—Alleged refusal to admit authorised personation agent to polling place—Action of Chief Constable, *Apr. 27*, 472.
Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland—Number of, Amount contributed to out of Vote for Office of Secretary for Scotland, *May 6*, 1515.
Trawling, Illegal—Difficulties in the way of legislation for protection of Scottish Fisheries, *Apr. 22*, 199.
Vaccine Lymph and Glycerinated Calf Lymph—Cost of, supplied to Local Government Board of Scotland, *May 6*, 1516.

Muskerry, Lord
Harrison, Appeal of Captain, against suspension of certificate of ss. "Grecian"—Payment of costs of appeal—Result of Conference with regard to, *May 5*, 1354.
Loading Port Clause in Ships' Articles of Agreement, Board of Trade Circular with regard to Decision in Thames Police Court—Withdrawal of Circular proposed, *May 5*, 1354.

Nannetti, Mr. [Dublin, College Green]
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 895.
Post Office Reforms—Plea for inspection of Sanitation under Factory Law—Discontent in Dublin Post Office, *Apr. 30*, 1061.

Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill
c. Rep.* *May 1*, 1069.

National Debt
Budget Statement, *Apr. 23*, 238.
Fixed Charge, Alteration of—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 244, 294, 343.
Fixed Charge, Amount of, applied to cost of Management, Interest on debt and Sinking Fund respectively for 1902–1903.
  Q. Mr. S. Buxton; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 5*, 1366.

National Debt—*cont.*
Sinking Fund, Amount proposed—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 246, 247, 265, 278, 292, 296, 302, 303, 324, 342.

Nationalist Convention
see Irish Land Bill.

National School Teachers, Ireland
Capitation Grant—Alleged payment of 4s. instead of 5s. Grant to Teachers examined in January to March, 1901—Payment of Balance.
  Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 476.
Kilkitt—Assistant Teacher at—Salary, Non-payment of.
  Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Apr. 22*, 110.
Pension Fund—Keane, Mr., Case of—Alleged refusal of Superannuation Allowance.
  Q. Mr. Devlin; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 28*, 649.
Result Fees—Equivalent Grant in lieu of below the average — Payment of Balance.
  Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *Apr. 27*, 476.
Salaries—Effect of change in mode of payment—Complaints with regard to loss involved—Award of normal Salary—Number of cases of, etc.
  Q. Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1374.

Naval and Military Expenditure
Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 247, 265, 268, 275, 289, 298, 301, 307, 308, 318, 334, 336, 344.

Naval Forces Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 444.
  2R.* *May 4*, 1142.
Debate [H.L.] *on* 2R.* *Apr. 30*, 922.
  Admiralty, Powers of the, 923.
  Non-Continuous Service men, Powers of Admiralty with regard to, 923, 925.
  Ratings, Use of Volunteers in Special, 923.
  Reserve, Maintenance of, 922, 925.
  Stoker-rating, Deficiency in the, 924.
  Volunteers, Establishment and use of Naval, 922.

Navy
Battleships—Old Battleships as Floating Forts—Utilisation of, for defence of home ports, proposed.
  Q. Mr. A. Taylor; *A.* Mr. Pretyman, *Apr. 21*, 7.
Boilers — Water Tube Boilers—Trials of H.M.S. "Hyacinth" and "Minerva"—Report Presented, *Apr. 30*, 915, 935.

[*cont.*

Navy—*cont.*
Expenditure, Curtailment of—Desire for general agreement among the Powers—Official communication of, to Foreign Governments.
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 658.

Gunnery — Defective Gunnery, due to inadequate supply of practice ammunition and inadequate interest taken in Gunnery by Admirals, etc., alleged—Scheme for Improvement.
Qs. Mr. G. Bowles; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 23*, 213.

Niclausse Boilers—Admiralty experiments with—Results.
Q. Mr. Harmsworth; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 28*, 647.

Officers—Retired Officers — Return Presented, *May 5*, 1363.

Plumbers — Permission for Transfer to Electrical Ratings.
Q. Mr. Kearley; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 23*, 211.

Reserve—Naval Reserve Men employed in Royal Dockyards, Number of on Mobilisation List.
Q. Mr. Harmsworth; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 30*, 942.

St. Margaret's Hope Naval Base—Site, Extent and Rental of.
Q. Mr. Black; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 29*, 788.

Seamen killed on Service in time of Peace—Pensions for Widows of.
Q. Mr. R. Lucas; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 27*, 454.

Warships—Obsolete Warships — Stipulation relating to vessels being broken up in United Kingdom—Abrogation of, in case of Sale of Ships at Devonport.
Q. Sir C. Furness; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *May 6*, 1509.

Nelson Corporation Bill
c. Rep.* *May 1*, 1068.

New Member Sworn
Lawson, Sir W., for County of Cornwall (North Western or Camborne Division), *Apr. 23*, 226.

New South Wales
Sugar Rebate, Protest against, Inquiries following protest not yet completed.
Q. Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 21*, 9.

Newton, Lord
Persian Gulf—Great Britain in, position of, *May 5*, 1353.

New Zealand
South African War Trophies, Allocation of, Consideration of request of New Zealand with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 948.

Niclausse Boilers
see Navy—Boilers.

Nigeria
Northern Nigeria—Railway construction in, under consideration.
Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 23*, 219.

Reports on, Delay in publication, Expediting of publication.
Q. Mr. H. Samuel; Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 22*, 111.

Nolan, Colonel [Galway, N.]
Pretoria Military Riot, Five men sentenced to death for participation in, information with regard to, Men outside jurisdiction of War Office, *Apr. 23*, 217.

Passionist Fathers in Paris — Enforced dissolution of community — Correspondence between English Embassy and French Government, *Apr. 23*, 222.

Norman, Mr. H. [Wolverhampton, S.]
Manchuria, Russian Demands, Statement in the House with regard to, *Apr. 29*, 789.

North British Railway (General Powers) Order Confirmation Bill
l. 1R.* *Map 4*, 1140.

North Eastern Railway Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 446.

North London Railway
see Workmen's Trains.

North Middlesex Gas Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.
2R.* *com.* *May 5*, 1326.

Northumberland, County of
Rural Postmen — Wages of—Non-payment of higher wage introduced by Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, Payment of arrears proposed.
Qs. Mr. Burt; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1514.

Northumberland, Duke of
Kinloch, Case of Colonel, *May 4*, 1165.
Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 633.

North's Navigation Collieries Bill
l. 3R* *Apr. 27*, 434.
c. 1R* *Apr. 28*, 643.

Norton, Captain [Newington, W.]
Income Tax Inquiry—Date of holding proposed Inquiry, *May 6*, 1512.

Post Office Officials, Leave of, *Apr. 30*, 1028.

Post Office Sorters in Charge of Travelling Post Offices—Improvement in position of, decision with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 944.

Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 881.

Obbia
See Somaliland.

O'Brien, Mr. J. F. X. [Cork]
- Cork Outdoor Postmen, Revision of duties of, *May 6*, 1504.

O'Brien, Mr. William [Cork]
- Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1376.

O'Connor, Mr. James [Wicklow, W.]
- Brighton Post Office—Promotion of Beckenham Woman Telegraphist to charge of Branch Office, to disadvantage of Brighton staff, reasons for, *May 4*, 1183.
- Wicklow, Valuation of Licensed Premises at—Raising of, involving increase of license duty, *May 4*, 1202.

O'Connor, Mr. T. P. [Liverpool, Scotland]
- London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 831.
- Post Office Reforms—Objections to Committee of Inquiry—Responsibility of Postmaster-General—Complaints regarding wages and sanitation—Advisability of placing Post Offices under the Factory Law, *Apr. 30*, 1051.

O'Dowd, Mr. [Sligo, S.]
- Labourers' (Ireland) Acts—Protests of Sligo Rural District Council against Value placed by Local Government Arbitrator on Land sought to be acquired under purposes of Labourers' Acts, *May 4*, 1202.
- Sligo Grazing Land, Sub-division of, to Labourers and Small Farmers—Resolution with regard to, *May 6*, 1517.

O'Doherty, Mr. [Donegal, N.]
- Emigrants at Londonderry, Treatment of, by Collector of Customs—Investigation into matter, *May 5*, 1373.
- Irish Unions, Amalgamation of—Appointment of Commission of Inquiry, *May 5*, 1373.

O'Kelly, Mr. [Mayo, N.]
- Beckett, Mr. Jacob, Date of Appointment—Attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions since Appointment—Qualification for Voting at Election of Petty Sessions Clerk, *May 6*, 1518.
- Heraghty, Mr.—Number of Attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions up to 25th February, 1903, *May 6*, 1518.

O'Malley, Mr. [Galway, Connemara]
- Evictions of Berridge Estate—Evictions for Non-payment of Rent—Extent and Rental of Holdings, etc., *Apr. 23*, 224.

Orange River Colony
- Administration, Progress of—Papers relating to, presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.
- Censorship of Letters and Telegrams, *Apr. 29*, 786.
- Finances, Papers relating to, presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.
- South African Loan—*Debate* [H.C.], *May 6*, 1522.

Osborne House
- Cost of Maintenance.
  - *Observations in Com.*, *Apr. 21*, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, *May 6*, 1590.

O'Shaughnessy, Mr. [Limerick, W.]
- Irish National Schools, Inspectors' Reports for 1901—Date of sending to Board of Education, *May 6*, 1518.

Outdoor Relief (Pensioners) Bill
- *c. Com.** *Apr. 30*, 1064.
- Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 1064.

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill
- Second Reading, Postponement of, *Apr. 27*, 444.

Pacific Cable
- Consultation with Admiralty in Respect of Route of Cable.
  - *Q.* Mr. Runciman; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 29*, 782.
- Date of Opening, Interruptions of Service, Number of.
  - *Q.* Sir J. Colomb; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain; *Apr. 30*, 947.

Palaces, Royal
- Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 9.

Parcel Post
- *see* Post Office.

Parker, Sir Gilbert [Gravesend]
- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1074.

Parks
- Chairs, Letting of.
  - *Observations in Com. May 6*, 1593.
- Refreshments in.
  - *Observations in Com. May 6*, 1593.

Parliament
- House of Lords.
  - Fee Fund, Annual Account Presented, *May 5*, 1327.
  - Manuscripts, Volume 2, Presentation of to House of Commons.
    - *Q.* Dr. Shipman; *A.* Mr. A. Elliot, *Apr. 29*, 782.

Passionist Fathers in Paris
- Enforced dissolution of Community—Correspondence between English Embassy and French Government
  - *Q.* Colonel Nolan; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 23*, 222.

Pauper Children
- Boarded-out Children, Number of, Distinguishing between those boarded out within and those without the Union—Statistics
  - *Q.* Mr. C. Hay; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 22*, 109.
- Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Institutions, Number of—Statistics
  - *Q.* Mr. Flower; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 27*, 451.

[cont.

Pauper Children—*cont.*

Cottage Homes, Return presented, *May 6*, 1502.

Ophthalmia and Ringworm—Number of Children in Metropolitan Poor Law Schools suffering from
Q. Sir W. Foster ; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 1*, 1074.

Paupers

Casual Paupers—System of early discharge of, in vogue at the Manchester and Salford Mission Casual Ward and Labour Yard—Adoption in Union Workhouses, proposed
Q. Mr. Schwann ; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Peel, Mr. W. R. [Manchester, S.]

Clifford's Inn, Sale of—Amount of proceeds applicable to purposes of Legal Education—Value of Clifford's Inn, Number of Members, etc., *Apr. 30*, 958.

London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 826.

Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill

l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 5*, 1326.

Penal Servitude

Conditional Licences Granted, *May 4*, 1141, 1181.

Penrhyn, Lord

see Debate on Bethesda (Industrial Dispute)

Pentillie Estate Bill

l. 1R* *Apr. 30*, 913.

Percy, Earl—*Under Secretary for India* [Kensington, S.]

Indian Technical and Industrial Schools—Report, Speedy issue of, rendering Return mentioned on Notice Paper unnecessary, *Apr. 27*, 464.

Somaliland Military Expeditions prior to 1898—Cost, *Apr. 27*, 463.

All-India Memorial to Queen Victoria—Site of, Funds, amount contributed by princes, chiefs, etc., application of portion of fund to productive, remedial or beneficial purposes, *Apr. 27*, 462.

Perks, Mr. [Lincolnshire, Louth]

Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 893.

Persia

Great Britain and Russia in Persia—Satisfactory settlement of questions involving interests of both Powers.
Q. Mr. G. Bowles ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 29*, 795.

Western Persia, British Commerce in—River Karun—Values and bulk of total traffic on—Encouragement of use of route by British and Indian traders.
Q. Mr. Schwann ; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 654.

Persian Gulf

Great Britain in, Position of—Russian policy with regard to Persia—Latest Developments—Grant of Additional Loan—Entrance into Commercial Treaty with Persia—Appointment of Belgian Customs House Officials in Gulf Ports, *May 5*, 1338.

Policy with regard to in the past, Statement of, *May 5*, 1329.

Russian Gunboats to Persian Gulf—Advancement of loans—Establishment of Bank—Attempt to secure a Naval Base in Persian Gulf on grounds of necessity of having outlet in Southern Sea—Gravity of situation, *May 5*, 1329.

Peterhead Harbour

Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 43.

Piers and Harbours

Scotland—Aultbea, Ross-shire—Construction of Pier at—Decision with regard to.
Q. Mr. Weir ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *May 4*, 1183.

Harbour Grants—Amount of, Sum allocated to harbours in crofting counties.
Q. Mr. Weir ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 658.

Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill

l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1140.

"Pique"

Prize-firing Record.
Q. Mr. Harmsworth ; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 28*, 646.

Police

County and Borough Police—Reports of Inspectors, presented, *Apr. 24*, 357, *Apr. 27*, 441.

Poor Law

Ireland — Amalgamation of Unions — Appointment of Commission of Inquiry, etc.
Q. Mr. O'Doherty ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1373.

Portsmouth Dockyard

Storehousemen — Status of — Reply to Communication on subject of.
Q. Mr. K. Hardie ; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *May 6*, 1502.

Portsmouth, Earl of

Army Guild—Proposed Service at St. Paul's Cathedral, Abandonment of—Attitude of Bishop of London towards, *Apr. 30*, 929.

Motor Cars—Regulation of, *Apr. 30*, 927.

Postage

Registered Postal Packets, Compensation for lost packets, payment of—Number and amount of claims for registered parcels lost, etc.
Q. Mr. H. Heaton ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *May 4*, 1183.

[*cont.*

Postage Rate
Canada—Periodicals sent from Canada at lower Rates than from Great Britain and Ireland — Reduction of rates proposed.
Q. Mr. C. Devlin; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 955.

Postal Orders
Counterfoils for, introduction made. *Os. Apr. 30*, 1016.
Denominations — Increase in number of, *Os. Apr. 30*, 1016, 1033, 1035, 1037.

Postmen
see Post Office.

Post Office
Postmaster General — Mr. Austen Chamberlain.
Committee of Inquiry into Grievances of the Staff.
House of Commons Committee, Objections to.
Os. Apr. 30, 1022, 1032, 1033, 1038, 1050, 1051, 1058.
Tweedmouth Committee, Work of the.
O. Apr. 30, 1021.
Dublin—Discontent among Employees in, *Apr. 30*, 1062.
Electric Generating Station — Proposed Provision of, Purposes for which required—Offer of Companies generating energy, Proposed Acceptance of.
Q. Mr. Harris; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 29*, 781.
Employees.
Four Classes of.
Os. Apr. 30, 1027, 1063.
Meal Relief—Complaints Regarding. *O. Apr. 30*, 1023.
Sanitation — Grievances Regarding, *Apr. 30*, 1024, 1033, 1035, 1048, 1052, 1061.
Sick-Leave—Time Spent on. *Os. Apr. 30*, 1035.
Wages—Complaints Regarding, *Apr. 30*, 1025, 1037, 1052.
Factory Law, Question of placing Offices under.
O. Apr. 30, 1048, 1053, 1055, 1061.
Friendly Societies, Reform in System of Postal Orders to Benefit.
Os. Apr. 30, 1017, 1033, 1037.
Money Orders and Postal Orders, *see* those titles.
Newspapers, Suggested Reduction for Postage of.
O. Apr. 30, 1033.
Parcel Post in Country Districts, Usefulness of.
O. Apr. 30, 1050, 1060.
Postmen, Wages of Auxiliary.
O. Apr. 30, 1042.
Rural Districts, Institution of a Second Post in.
Os. Apr. 30, 1017, 1034.

Post Office—*cont.*
Scotland — Contract for Conveyance of Mails between Glasgow, Greenock and Campbelltown, Copy Ordered, *Apr. 27*, 447.
Sorters in Charge of Travelling Post Offices—Improvement in position of—decision with regard to.
Q. Captain Norton. *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 944.
Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists, Promotions, Return, bringing up to date of.
Q. Mr. Jacoby; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 27*, 452.
Stamps, Re-purchase of.
Os. Apr. 30, 1019, 1035, 1064.
Telegrams, Receipt on payment for, *see* Telegrams.
Telegrams, Sending by Post of Re-directed, *see* Telegrams.

Post Office Services
Vote for, *Apr. 30*, 1015.

Powell, Sir Francis [Wigan]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1123.

Pretoria
Condemned Soldier, J. Roache—Appeal for Commutation of Sentence, Suspension of Sentence, proposed.
Q. Mr. Joyce; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 29*, 786.
Condemned Soldiers of Leinster Regiment at — Commutation of Death Sentence.
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 27*, 456.
Military Riot—Five Men Sentenced to Death for participation in, Information with regard to Men outside jurisdiction of War Office.
Qs. Colonel Nolan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 23*, 217.

Pretyman, Captain—*Lord of the Admiralty* [Suffolk, Woodbridge]
Battleships—Old Battleships as Floating Forts, Utilisation of, for defence of Home Ports, *Apr. 21*, 7.
Simonstown, South Africa—Construction of docks at, Employment of Continental Workmen and Indian Coolies to the disadvantage of British and South African Workmen, Observance of Fair Wages Resolution, *May 4*, 1189.

Prevention of Corruption Bill
Debate [H.C.] *on* 2R., *May 6*, 1583.
Agents within the meaning of the Act, 1583, 1586.
Bankers' Interests, Consideration of, 1585.
Brokers, Commission of, 1585.
Commission on Premiums, 1583.
Insurance Companies, Interests of, 1583.
Premiums on Insurance Policies, 1583.
Standing Committee on Law, Bill referred to, *May 6*, 1588.

"Princess Alexandra"
Accident to—Officer in charge at time of accident; rank and certificate of, Cost of repairs, etc.
Q. Mr. C. McArthur; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 30*, 943.

Prisons
Unproductive Labour, Abolition of.
Q. Mr. Flower; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *Apr. 27*, 451.

Public Accounts Committee
Report Presented, *May 1*, 1135.

Public Buildings (Great Britain)
Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 42.

Public Health
Vital Statistics, Uselessness of Statistics to Medical Officers as at present issued —Issue of, for urban and rural sanitary districts proposed.
Q. Mr. H. Hobhouse; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 30*, 943.

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill
c. 1R.* *May 4*, 1206.

Public Record Office
Protection from Fire.
Q. Mr. H. D. Greene; *A.* Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, *Apr. 29*, 792.

Queensland
Correspondence relating to Pacific Island Labourers Act, presented, *Apr. 27*, 441, 448.

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill
c. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 445.
con. *May 4*, 1178.

Rack Renting
see Irish Land Bill.

Railways
see South African Loan.
see Workmen's Trains.
Accidents—Prevention of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 119, 126, 133, 139, 143.
Accidents—Return Presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.
Agricultural Products.
Observations in Com. *Apr. 21*, 49, 50, 61.
Castlerea Railway Inquiry—Exclusion of Press Representatives, Admission in future proposed.
Q. Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 30*, 960.
Employees, Long hours of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 121, 132, 135.

Railways—*cont.*
Light Railways
Orders Presented, *Apr. 30*, 916, 936.
Proceedings of Board of Trade and Light Railway Commissioners—Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 441, 448.
Scotland, *see* that Heading.
London Underground Railway, System of electric traction—Date of introduction—
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 30*, 953.
Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill, *Apr. 30*, 1030.
Rates and Charges
Agricultural Produce
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 116, 117, 118, 130, 136, 161, 167, 173, 174.
Preferential Railway Rates—Interdepartmental Communications—
Q. Mr. Chaplin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 466.
Return Preliminary Statement for year 1902, Presented, *May 6*, 1501.

Railway Servants
Debate [H.C.] *May 6*, 1593.
Accidents (Result of hours of labour)—1596, 1608.
Accidents, Prevention of—1596, 1600, 1608, 1610, 1615, 1624.
Factory and Railway Workers, Comparison between—1593, 1601.
Hours of labour of railway servants, 1594, 1597, 1608, 1612, 1614, 1624.
Inspection of railway labour, 1596, 1601, 1618, 1624.
Mileage, Accidents in relation to—1617.
Railway and Canal Commissioners, 1597, 1605.
Trade, Board of, Powers of—1594, 1597, 1599, 1608, 1609, 1614, 1620.
United States, Conditions of labour in—1610, 1624.

Randles, Mr. [Cumberland, Cockermouth]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1097.
Volunteer Sergeant-Instructors, Payment of—Modification of Army Order with regard to, *May 5*, 1368.

Rasch, Major [Essex, Chelmsford]
Taxation—Remission of Corn Duty, *Apr. 23*, 335.

Rea, Mr. [Gloucester]
Clifford's Inn, Sale of—Assent of Attorney-General to, Reasons for—Alternative Scheme, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 957.

Redmond, Mr. William [Clare, E.]
- Civil Expenditure—Old Age Pensions, *Apr. 23*, 250.
- Houses of Parliament Buildings—Condition of Post Office and Strangers' Smoking Room, *Apr. 21*, 36.
- Income Tax Inquiry—Date of Holding proposed Inquiry, *May 6*, 1512.
- Kiladysert Petty Sessions, Removal of Press Reporter by Police Inspector from, *Apr. 27*, 476.
- Kiladysert Police, Removal of Reporter from Petty Sessions Court by—Authority for Action of Police, *Apr. 23*, 224.
- Magherafelt Disturbances.
  - Action of Police on occasion of—Full Investigation, *Apr. 27*, 474.
  - Police, Treatment of, by Mob, *Apr. 29*, 793.
- Manchuria—Russian Demands, Intention of British Government with regard to, *Apr. 29*, 789.
- Naval Expenditure, Curtailment of—Desire for General Agreement among the Powers, Official Communication of, to Foreign Governments, *Apr. 28*, 688.
- Pretoria, Condemned Soldiers of Leinster Regiment at—Commutation of Death Sentence, *Apr. 27*, 456.
- St. Louis Exhibition, Exhibition of Irish Industries at, Arrangements for, by Irish Department of Agriculture, *May 6*, 1517.
- Sinking Fund, Amount of, proposed, *Apr. 23*, 247.
- Transvaal, War Stores in, Destruction of, *Apr. 29*. 787.

Redmond, Mr. J. [Waterford]
- Hanbury, Mr., Death of—Expressions of regret, *Apr. 28*, 659.
- Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1206.

Reformatory and Industrial Schools
- Certified Day Industrial Schools. Payment of grant, continuation of in respect of children absent owing to an epidemic. Copy of recommendation presented, *Apr. 27*, 442.
- Great Britain—Report presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.

Reid, Sir Robert [Dumfries Burghs]
- Licensing Law, (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 425.
- Shipping—Display of British Flag by Foreign Ships, *Apr. 22*, 162.
- Somaliland Expedition—Character and Conduct of the Mullah—Protest against warlike action without definite information—Position of Italy with regard to the Mullah, *Apr. 30*, 980.
- South African Loan, *May 6*, 1563.

Renshaw, Sir Charles [Renfrewshire, W.]
- Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill, *May 1*, 1134.

Reserve
- *see* Navy.

Revenue and Expenditure
- Account Presented, *Apr. 29*, 779.
- Budget—*see* that title.
- Contributions to Revenue—English, Scotch and Irish, respectively, Statistics.
  - *Q.* Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 21*, 6.
- Expenditure in 1902-1903—Extra Expenditure on Account of the War, ordinary expenditure.
  - *Q.* Mr. S. Buxton; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 4*, 1185.
- Expenditure—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 244, 247.
- Ireland, Exchequer Contributions to —Amount of, etc.
  - *Q.* Sir E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 6*, 1503.
- Statement of, as laid before House at opening of Budget, Presented, *Apr. 23*, 210.

Revenue Buildings
- Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 41.

Ribblesdale, Lord
- Shops [Early Closing] Bill, *Apr. 28*, 607.

Richards, Mr. H. C. [Finsbury, E.]
- Indian Judges, Retiring Pensions of—Case of Sir Bhashyam Aiyanger, exceptional nature of, *Apr. 24*, 357.
- Irish Lights Commission—Steps to bring work of, within Parliamentary control, *Apr. 23*, 213.

Richmond Park
- Paths, widening of.
  - *Observations in Com., Apr. 21*, 33, 34.

Ridley, Mr. Forde [Bethnal Green, S.W.]
- Aliens—Bankrupt Aliens—Return relative to, Grant of, *Apr. 30*, 954.

Ridley, Hon. M. White [Stalybridge]
- National Expenditure, Reasons for increase of — Necessity for improved armaments, etc., *Apr. 23*, 268.

Rifle Ranges
- Dundalk Rifle Range—Employment of, by military authorities.
  - *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 22*, 111.

Riparian Rights
- *see* Irish Land Bill.

Ripon, Marquess of
- Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 638.

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T. *Chancellor of the Exchequer* [Croydon]
- Agriculture—Agricultural Rates Act—Exchequer Grants under, issued to England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively—Statistics, *Apr. 21*, 7.

[*cont.*

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.- *cont.*

Budget.

Statement, *Apr. 23*, 228.

General Discussion in Com. of Ways and Means—Reply to Questions and Criticism, *Apr. 23*, 258.

Replies to Questions and Criticism, *Apr. 23*, 250, 255, 262, 281, 313, 314, 324, 331, 332, 334, 338, 341, 344, 346, 351, 352.

Resolutions, Order of Taking, *May 6* 1582.

Coal Export Duty—Incorrect Declarations—Possible Loss to Revenue arising from, *Apr. 27*, 453.

Corn Duty.

Budget Proposal in respect to Remission of Duty—Goods to which Proposal applies, *Apr. 27*, 454.

Proposed Refund of Duty upon Imported Grain, *May 5*, 1371.

Yield for Year 1902-1903—Statistics, *Apr. 27*, 454.

Emigrants at Londonderry—Treatment of, by Collector of Customs—Investigation into Matter, *May 5*, 1373.

Exchequer Bonds—Payment or Renewal of Bonds Repayable in Present Year *May 4*, 1186.

Exchequer Contributions to Ireland, Amount of, &c., *May 6*, 1503.

Expenditure in 1902-1903–Exra expenditure on account of the War, ordinary expenditure, *May 4*, 1185.

Imperial Revenue, English, Scotch and Irish Contributions to, respectively—Statistics, *Apr. 21*, 6.

Income Tax Inquiry—Date of holding proposed inquiry, *May 6*, 1512.

Invert Sugar—As to necessity of placing in Bond under provisions of Brussels Sugar Convention, *May 6*, 1502.

Irish Poor Rate—Exchequer Issue in payment of, amount of, statistics, *Apr. 29*, 782.

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 412.

National Debt—Fixed Charge, Amount of, applied to cost of management, interest on Debt and Sinking Fund respectively, for 1902 1903, *May 6*, 1366.

Osborne House—Expenditure on, *May 6*, 1591.

Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1584.

Seamen killed on Service in Time of Peace—Pensions for Widows of, *Apr. 27*, 454.

South African Loan, *May 6*, 1571.

Transvaal and Orange River Colonies—Expenditure on Non-Military purposes, *Apr. 29*, 780.

Transvaal — Compensation, Payment of Claims, from what funds to be drawn, *May 4*, 1185.

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.—*cont.*

Transvaal Loan — Items included in £4,000,000 to be repaid by Transvaal out of Loan, *May 4*, 1185.

Roache, J.

Death Sentence on.—Appeal for commutation of sentence. Suspension of sentence proposed.

Q. Mr. Joyce; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain. *Apr. 29*, 786.

Roberts, Earl.

see Military Law and Procedure.

Roberts, Mr Bryn [Carnarvonshire, Eifion]

Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 559.

Blue-book necessary that is out of print, *Apr. 21*, 94.

Roberts, Mr. H. [Denbighshire, W.]

Indian State Railways—Delhi Conference, resolutions of, with reference to adoption of racial distinctions in appointments to staff. Application of policy to railways other than State Railways, costs of change, etc., *May 6*, 1511.

Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 423.

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill, *May 1*, 1133.

Madras Law Students—Prohibition of, from taking part in discussions on public affairs—Sanction of Government, *Apr. 23*, 217.

Robertson, Mr. Edmund [Dundee]

South African Loan, *May 6*, 1577.

Robson, Mr. [South Shields]

Bethesda (Industrial Dispute), *Apr. 27*, 584.

Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1433.

London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 771.

Taxation—Remission of Corn Tax—Reduction of Income Tax—Export Duty on Coal—Army Expenditure, *Apr. 23*, 328.

Rollit, Sir Albert [Islington, S.]

Army Expenditure — Recognition of Auxiliaries, *Apr. 23*, 308.

Light Dues, Proposed Reduction of, *Apr. 28*, 648.

London Education Bill, *Apr. 29*, 868.

Post Office.

Officials, Special Leave of Absence for, *Apr. 30*, 1028.

Postal Orders, Increase in Number of Denominations for—Grievances of Officials with regard to Sanitation—Question of a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry, *Apr. 30*, 1033.

Railways—Rates and Conditions of Transport—Hours of Railway Employees—Railway Accidents, *Apr. 22*, 130.

[*cont.*

Rollitt, Sir Albert—*cont.*
St. Louis International Exhibition—British Co-operation, Appointment of Commission—Grant for purpose of Exhibition, *Apr. 28*, 648.
Taxation—Reduction of Income Tax—Necessity for inquiry into Incidence—Reasons for graduations of Abatements—Remission of the Coal Tax advisable—Taxation of Tea, Sugar and Corn—Connection between Consols and Savings Banks, *Apr. 23*, 308.
Trade, Board of—Necessity for improvement in Intelligence Department—Administration of Lighthouse Fund—Arrangements for St. Louis Exhibition, *Apr. 22*, 164.

Ropner, Colonel [Stockton]
South Africa, British Trade in, Merchants' Shipping Ring, *Apr. 22*, 170.

"Rosario"
Prize-firing record.
Q. Mr. Harmsworth; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 28*, 646.

Rosscarbery.
Mail Service—Establishment of second daily service, institution of enquiries with regard to.
Q. Mr. E. Barry; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 23*, 225.

Royal Commissions.
Annual Cost since year 1892.
Q. Mr. Malcolm; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 479.

Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.
Park-keepers, Pay and pensions of.
Observations in Com. Apr. 21, 34.
Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 31.
see also names of Parks.

Royal Warrant,
Exercise of—*see* Case of Colonel Kinloch.

Runciman, Mr. [Dewsbury]
Pacific Cable Consultation with Admiralty in respect of route of cable, *Apr. 29*, 782.
Sugar Exports from Mauritius to Australia, decrease of Australian sugar duty, *Apr. 29*, 788.

Russell, Mr. T. W. [Tyrone, S.]
Dublin — Marlborough Street Training College—Dwelling House Accommodation for Students, Provision of, *May 4*, 1200.
Irish Land Bill, *May 4*, 1266.
Irish Land Bill—Estates in English Court of Chancery, Provision for, in Bill—Case of Marquis of Ely's Estate, *Apr. 29*, 794.
Royal Irish Constabulary—Official Papers, Destruction of, *May 4*, 1203.

Russia
Manchuria, Position with regard to the Evacuation of.
O. Marquess of Lansdowne, *May 1*, 1067.
New General Customs Tariff—Translation of, with comparisons of rates of Customs Duty contained in Tariff with rates in force on imports into European Russia from United Kingdom, Presented, *Apr. 27*, 437.

St. Andrew's University
Accounts Presented, *Apr. 21*, 6.
Annual Statistical Report Presented, *Apr. 21*, 6; *Apr. 27*, 441.
Finances, Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 441.

St. Louis International Exhibition
British Co-operation — Appointment of Commission — Grant for purpose of Exhibition.
Q. Sir A. Rollit; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 648.
Irish Industries, Exhibition of—Arrangements for, by Irish Department of Agriculture.
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 6*, 1517.

St. Margaret's Hope
Naval Base—Site, Extent and Rental of.
Q. Mr. Black; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 29*, 788.

St. Paul's Cathedral
Proposed Army Guild Service, Abandonment of—Attitude of Bishop of London towards, *Apr. 30*, 929.

Salford Corporation Bill
l. Com. May 5*, 1326.

Salmon Fisheries
Scotland.
Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.
Salmon Disease, Bacteriological Investigation into Causes of—Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.

Saltoun, Lord
Colonel Kinloch, Case of, *May 4*, 1152.

Samuel, Mr. H. S. [Tower Hamlets, Limehouse]
Entebbe, Uganda.
Native and European Quarters, Proximity of — Removal of Native Huts, proposed, *May 6*, 1504.
Water Supply, Inadequacy of, Contamination by Sewage, *May 6*, 1503.
Income Tax—Select Committee—Terms of Reference, Inclusion in, of Examination into Practicability of Graduation of the Tax above the £700 limit, *Apr. 29*, 793.
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 737.

[*cont.*

Samuel, Mr. H. S.—*cont.*

Nigeria.

Railway Construction in Northern Nigeria under Consideration, *Apr. 23*, 219.

Reports on, Delay in Publication, Expediting of Publication, *Apr. 22*, 111.

Uganda Railways—Construction of Railway from Lake Victoria to Lake Albert—Estimated Cost of Undertaking, *May 6*, 1512.

Samuel, Mr. Herbert [Yorkshire, Cleveland]

Agriculture—Committee on Afforestation—Restricrions regarding Swine Fever, *Apr. 21*, 58.

Sassoon, Sir E. [Hythe]

Bagdad Railway—Constantinople Railway Scheme, Reports relative to, *Apr. 27*, 489.

Savings Banks

Consols—Affected by fall in, *see* Consols.

Post Office Savings Bank Department—Employment of Telegraph Apparatus subsequent to decision regarding employment of Telephone Service.
Q. Mr. C. Hay; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 23*, 211.

Scarborough Gas Bill

c. Rep * *Apr. 28*, 642.
*con.** *May 6*, 1497.

Schools

Public Elementary Schools Warned—Quarterly Returns Ordered, *Apr. 29*, 779.

Schwann, Mr. C. E. [Manchester, N.]

Agriculture, Introduction of live cattle from Argentina—Inspection of imported cattle—Transport of cattle, *Apr. 21*, 43.

Casual Paupers—System of early discharge of, in vogue at the Manchester and Salford Mission Casual Ward and Labour Yard—Adoption in Union Workhouses, proposed, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Ceylon Tea Estates, Employment of Children on—Age at which employed—Desirability of bringing question before Educational Sub-Committee of the Commission on the Incidence of Taxation, *May 4*, 1190.

Hanbury, Mr.—Death of, Expressions of regret, *Apr. 28*, 659.

Indian Administration—Lord Ampthill's deprecation of—Imputations on, *Apr. 23*, 218.

Indian Railways — Delhi Railway Conference—Non-submission of Proceedings of to Government — Proposed increase of European and Anglo-Indian employees on Indian Railways, *Apr. 23*, 217.

Schwann, Mr. C. E.—*cont.*

Motor Cars, Identification of—Desirability of compelling Motor Cars to bear numbers to facilitate Identification—Provision for, in forthcoming Bill, *May 5*, 1371.

Venezuela, Claims of Nations against—Order of Consideration—Expenses of Blockade—Attitude of Venezuelan Government towards, *Apr. 27*, 465.

Western Persia, British Commerce in—River Karun, Values and Bulk of Total Traffic on—Encouragement of use of route by British and Indian Traders, *Apr. 28*, 654.

Scotland

Board of Manufactures—Committee on Administration of Grants in Aid of Art—Date of Report.
Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. A.G. Murray, *Apr. 29*, 793.

Burgh Police Bill—*Debate on* 2R [H C.], *May 1*, 1134.

Congested Districts—Report presented, *Apr. 27*, 440; *Apr. 27*, 448.

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill, *see* under that title.

Court of Session—Act of Sederunt anent Regulating Places at which Commissary Business shall be conducted, Presented, *Apr. 27*, 441.

Edinburgh, *see* that title.

Exchequer Department—Salary of Clerks. *Observations in Com.*, *Apr. 21*, 98, 99.

Fisheries—Protection against Trawlers necessary.
Os. Mr. Cathcart Wason, *Apr. 22*, 189; Mr. Black, 192; Mr. Weir, 195; Mr. Bignold, 196; Mr. Crombie, 198; Mr. A. Graham Murray, 199; Captain Sinclair, 203.

Forth, New Naval Base—Acquisition of Land for Erection of Houses of Employees—Erection of Town on Plan of Garden Cities.
Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *May 6*, 1508.

Grants—Continuation Classes in Crofting Counties—Number of schools receiving grants—Amount paid.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Murray, *Apr. 28*, 646.

Holyrood Palace—Sanitary condition of,
Q. Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell; *A.* Mr. Ailwyn-Fellowes, *Apr. 22*, 113.

Inebriate Reformatories, Number of—Amount contributed out of Vote for Office of Secretary for Scotland.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Murray, *May 6*, 1515.

Land Laws, Expediency of Introduction.
Q. Mr. Weir. *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 659.

Land Registers Bill—*Debate* [H. L.], *Apl. 30*, 918.

Amend. in Com. May 5, 1328.

[*cont.*

Scotland—*cont.*
  Light Railways—Difficulties of Construction,
    Observations in com., Apr. 22, 160.
  Local Government—Return of areas, population, valuation of counties, etc., Presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.
  Lunacy Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 437.
  Marriage Laws in—*see* Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.
  National Gallery—Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 438.
  Police—Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 437.
  Prisons—Annual Report Presented, *Apr. 27*, 4317.
  Ultimus Haeres—Account of Receipts and Payments, List of Estates, etc. Return ordered. *Apr. 27*, 448; *Apr. 29*, 779.

Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Bill
  c. Rep.* *May 5*, 1361.

Seaforth Highlanders
  1st Volunteer Battalion, Discharges—Withholding of, from Men joining Lovat's Scouts, alleged—Inquiry, proposed.
    Qs. Mr. Weir; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 22*, 111.

Seeley, Major J. E. B. [Isle of Wight]
  15-Pounder Gun—Pattern of, Dissimilar to 1885 gun—Shooting capacities of 1885, 1889, and Ehrherdt Guns respectively, *Apr. 28*, 650; *Apr. 30*, 949.
  Light-ships—Communication with Shore—Use of Wireless Telegraphy, *Apr. 22*, 151.
  Wireless Telegraphy for British Light Vessels, Delay in providing, *Apr. 28*, 657.

Seeley, Mr. C. H. [Lincoln]
  Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1125.

Selborne, Earl of—*First Lord of the Admiralty.*
  Naval Forces Bill, *Apr. 30*, 922.

Select Committees
  Cost of, since year 1892.
    Q. Mr. Malcolm; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 479.

Seton-Karr, Sir Harry [St. Helens]
  Railway Servants, *May 6*, 1608.

Settle Limestone Quarry Company
  Lock-out of Employees, Re-engagement Refused until Membership of Trade Union renounced.
    Q. Mr. Keir Hardie; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Sewage Disposal
  Report of Royal Commission—Carrying out of Recommendations of.
    Q. Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. G. Lawson, *May 4*, 1198.

Sharpe, Mr. W. E. [Kensington, N.]
  Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1098.

Shaw, Mr. Thomas [Hawick Burghs]
  Holyrood Palace, occupation of—Sanitary repairs, *Apr. 21*, 11.
  Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1466.
  Transvaal Agricultural Resources—Colonel Thomas's Report, *May 5*, 1368.

Sheehan, Mr. D. D. [Cork Co., Mid.]
  Dundrum Lunatic Asylum—Re-arrest of escaped Criminal Lunatics—Case of Sheehan, *May 4*, 1188.
  Farranes Licensing Prosecution—Sergeant Glyn, conduct of, *May 6*, 1519.
  Poor Law Medical Officers, Position of—Inclusion of question within Scope of Royal Commission inquiring into Amalgamation of Irish Unions, *May 4*, 1202.
  Wallis, Mr. Henry, J.P.—Swearing in of, in manner required by Law, *May 5*, 1372.

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Bill
  *l. com.** *Apr. 28*, 593.

Shipman, Dr.
  House of Lords Manuscripts, Volume 2—Presentation of, to House of Commons, *Apr. 29*, 782.

Shipping
  see International Mercantile Marine Company.
  South Africa, Rates to, *see* South Africa—Trade.

Shipowners' Negligence (Remedies) Bill
  c. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 481.

Shipston-on-Stour
  Worcestershire Licensing Committee, Decision of, with regard to—Reinstatement of town, proposed.
    Q. Colonel Long; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr.* 30, 954.

Shops (Early Closing) Bill
  l. 3R., *Apr. 28*, 611.
  Debate [H.L.]
    Liberty of Adult Labour, *Apr. 28*, 595, 605, 608.
    Local Authorities, Powers of, *Apr. 28*, 604, 610.
    Medical Considerations, *Apr. 28*, 607.
    Provisional Order, *Apr. 28*, 605.

[*cont.*

Shops (Early Closing) Bill—*cont.*
Debate—cont.
Retail Trade, Effect on, *Apr. 28*, 601, 606.
Trades Unions, Power of, *Apr. 28*, 600, 606.
Voluntary Closing of Shops, *Apr. 28*, 600, 603.

Shrewsbury Election
Commissioner in Shrewsbury Election Petition—Opinion of, with regard to repression of Corrupt Practices—Prosecution for Corruption.
Q. Mr. Soares; *A.* Sir R. Finlay, *May 4*, 1198.

Sierra Leone
Coaling Station—Progress of Armament of.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 457.

Simeon, Sir Barrington [Southampton]
Weymouth Licensing Sessions — Non-admission of Women and Children to public-houses for purposes of making Slate Club Payments as a Condition of Renewing Licences, *Apr. 27*, 470.

Sinclair, Captain J. [Forfar]
Stationery and Printing—Indexing of Hansard, *Apr. 21*, 84.
Trawling, Illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish fisheries, *Apr 22*, 203.

Sinclair, Mr. Louis [Essex, Romford]
Agriculture—Notification of Glanders—Control of drinking troughs—Railway Rates for farmers, *Apr. 21*, 49.
Ilford Sorting Office—Sanitary accommodation, Inadequacy of—Inquiry proposed, *Apr. 24*, 358.
Trade—Disadvantages of English Agriculturists, *Apr. 22*, 160.

Sinking Fund
see National Debt.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill.
c. con. Apr 28*, 641.
3 R* *May 1*, 1068.
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1138.

Skewes-Cox, Mr. T. [Surrey, Kingston]
Richmond Park, Widening of Paths in, *Apr. 21*, 33.

Skipper Certificates
Rules for granting.
Observations in com., Apr. 22, 171.

Sligo
Grazing Lands — Subdivision of, to labourers and small farmers—Resolution with regard to.
Q. Mr. O'Dowd; *A.* Mr. Wyndham. *May 6*, 1517.

Sloan, Mr. T. H. [Belfast, S.]
Belfast Post Office Sorting Clerks—Increase of Wages—Delay in Payment of, *Apr. 27*, 478.
Education, Result Fees, Ireland—Equivalent Grant in view of, below the Average—Payment of Balance, *Apr. 27*, 476.
Magherafelt Disturbances, Action of Police on occasion of—Full Investigation, proposed, *Apr. 27*, 474.
National School Teachers' Capitation Grant — Alleged Payment of 4s. instead of 5s.—Grant to Teachers examined in January to March, 1901, Payment of Balance, *Apr. 27*, 476.
Royal Irish Constabulary—Destruction of Official Papers, *May 4*, 1203.

Smallpox
Private Establishments for Smallpox Patients in County of London area—Number of, Inspection, etc.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 4*, 1186.

Soares, Mr. E. [Devon, Barnstaple]
Barnstaple Rural Postman—Dismissal of, on ground of ill-health—Grant of Pension or Compassionate Gratuity, *Apr. 23*, 223.
Harbours on Devon and Cornwall Coast, required, *Apr. 22*, 181, 182, 183, 184. 185.
Post Office Officials, Provincial Salaries of —*Apr. 30*, 1029.
Shrewsbury Election—Commissioner in Shrewsbury Election Petition—Opinion of, with regard to repression of Corrupt Practices—Prosecutions for Corruption, *May 4*, 1198.

Soldiers
Employment for Discharged Soldiers—Increase of Beggars in Holland Division of Lincolnshire due to Discharged Soldiers Out of Work—Provision of Employment for such cases.
Q. Mr. Mansfield; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr, 28*, 653.

Somaliland
Observations in Com. of Supply, Apr. 30, 963.
Abyssinia, Attitude of, 997.
Bullets used by Army, 990, 992, 993, 1002.
History of previous Expeditions, 964, 1008.
International importance of Somaliland, 971, 973, 987.
Italian Government, Relations with, 969, 975, 985, 986, 996, 1003.
Jenner, Murder of Mr., 965.
Mullah, Position and tactics of the, 964, 974, 980, 987, 994, 1007, 1009.
[*cont.*

Somaliland—*cont.*

Observations in Com. of Supply—cont.

- Obbia as a landing place for troops, 970, 986, 996.
- Swayne, Operations of Colonel, 967, 975, 995, 1001.

Cost of expedition—Statistics.
Qs. Mr. C. Hobhouse; *As.* Lord Cranborne, Lord Stanley, *Apr. 22*, 108; *Apr. 27*, 458.

Disaster, details of.
Q. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 23*, 215.

Foreign Office Vote—Discussion of position of Affairs, on taking of (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman), *Apr. 27*, 480.

Latest information with regard to.
Q. Earl Spencer; *A.* Marquess of Lansdowne, *Apr. 28*, 638.

Military Expeditions prior to 1898—Cost.
Q. Mr. C. Hobhouse; *A.* Earl Percy *Apr. 27*, 463.

Mullah's Supply of Munitions—Channel through which obtained.
Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 788.

Operation of British Troops outside British Somaliland without Parliamentary Sanction.
Qs. Mr. C. Hobhouse; *As.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 655.

Service Bullet, Alleged inefficiency of, in campaign — General Manning's despatch.
Qs. Mr. A. Lee; *As.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 461.

Wireless Telegraphy — Employment of Marine instruments, alleged—Substitution of, for apparatus adapted to overland use, proposed—Employment of Experts.
Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 947.

South African Loan and War Contribution (Guarantee)

Consideration in Committee and Debate, *May 6*, 1522.

- Agriculture in the Transvaal, *see* Transvaal (sub-heading).
- Bloemfontein Conference, Work of, 1548.
- Central African Railway, Funds for, 1543.
- Constabulary, Organisation of, 1541, 1568.
- Customs Rates, Reduction of, 1549.
- Development Loan, *see* subheading Loan.
- Joint Council, Suggestions for, 1540, 1552.
- Loan.
  - Amount of, 1531.
  - Arrangement of, 1533, 1554, 1571.

South African Loan and War Contribution (Guarantees)—*cont.*

Consideration in Committee and Debate—cont.

- Loan—*cont.*
  - Colonial Contributions to, 1522.
  - Development Loan, 1536.
  - Distribution of, 1536.
  - Security for, 1540, 1561.
  - Voluntary Contributions, 1528.
- Milner, Policy and Work of Lord, 1547, 1565, 1569, 1578.
- Mining Groups, Obligations of, 1534, 1576.
- National Debt, Effect of Loan on, 1555, 1569.
- Orange River Colony.
  - Expenditure, 1545.
  - Finances of, 1535.
  - Loan, Share in, 1541.
  - Revenue, 1545.
  - Surplus, 1546, 1555.
- Police—*see* subheading Constabulary.
- Portuguese Government, Negotiations with, 1579.
- Railways, Money for Development of, 1525, 1542, 1556, 1558, 1561, 1564, 1567, 1573.
- Shipping Freights, 1574.
- Transvaal.
  - Agriculture in, 1570.
  - Expenditure, 1545, 1562, 1579.
  - Finances, 1534, 1553.
  - Irrigation, System of, 1525. 1566.
  - Land Settlement Scheme, 1526, 1565, 1573, 1579.
  - Railways, *see* subheading Railways.
  - Revenue, 1545, 1560, 1562.
  - Surplus, 1555, 1559.
  - Taxation, 1523, 1564, 1574.
  - Working Classes, 1530.
- War Compensation, 1537, 1554.

South African Trade

Development of—Shipping Rates.
Observations in Com. Apr. 22, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 176, 177.

South African War

Cost and Expenditure.
Return Ordered, *Apr. 27*, 449.
Return Presented, *Apr. 29*, 779.

Irregular Forces, Officers and men serving in, Number of — Rewards and promotions.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1506.

Milita, Officers and men serving in, Number of—Rewards and promotions.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1506.

[*cont.*

South African War—*cont.*
Prisoners undergoing sentences for offences arising out of War — Liberation of.
Q. Mr. Fenwick ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 780.
Regular Forces, Officers and men serving in, Number of — Rewards and promotions.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1506.
Volunteers, Officers and men serving in, Number of, Rewards and promotions.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1506.
War Trophies — Allocation of, consideration of request of New Zealand with regard to.
Q. Mr. Bill ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 948.
Yeomanry — Officers and men serving in, Number of—Rewards and promotions.
Q. Mr. Yerburgh ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 6*, 1506.

Southampton Harbour Bill
l. Com. Apr. 27*, 434.

South Wales Mineral Railway Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R.* *May 4*, 1138.
c. 1R.* *May 5*, 1361.

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill
l. con. Apr. 27*, 434.

Speaker, Rt. Hon. W. C. Gully [Carlisle]
Amendment, relating to subjects other than those under discussion, ruled out of order, *Apr. 27*, 505.
Interruption—Going beyond limits of an, *Apr. 27*, 530.
Second Reading Debate, Member exceeds scope of, *Apr. 21*, 73.
Unparliamentary Language—"Falsehood" Use of term in connection with a Member, *Apr. 27*, 569.
Voting—Member locked into wrong lobby by mistake, *Apr. 24*, 431.

Spear, Mr. J. W. [Devonshire, Tavistock]
Agriculture, Railway rates for Agricultural produce—Inspector of Stallions, *Apr. 21*, 50.
Harbours on Devon and Cornwall Coast, *Apr. 22*, 183.
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1488.

Spencer, Earl
Manchuria — Russian Negotiations, Reported communications between Russian and Chinese Governments on subject of Evacuation of part of Manchuria —Further information with regard to, Truth of Newspaper Report, *Apr. 28*, 639 ; *Apr. 30*, 917.
Military Law and Procedure, *Apr. 28*, 631.
Naval Forces Bill, *Apr. 30*, 924.

Spencer, Earl—*cont.*
Somaliland Military Expedition, Latest Information with regard to, *Apr. 28*, 638.

Spirits
see Tobacco, Beer, and Spirits.

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 433.
3R.* *May 4*, 1138.
c. 1R.* *May 5*, 1361.

Stallions
Inspection of.
Observations in Com. Apr. 21, 50, 64.

Stanley, Lord—*Financial Secretary to the War Office* [Lancashire, Westhoughton]
Army Corps—First, Second, Third, and Fourth Army Corps, Effective Strength and Composition of, Grant of Return relative to, Form of Return, etc., *Apr. 27*, 458 ; *May 4*, 1192.
Army Guild of the Holy Standard, Relation of to Army and War Office, *Apr. 27*, 458.
City of London Artillery Volunteers—Uselessness of Guns allotted to Volunteers, Speedy Equipment of Guns recently supplied to Regiment, *May 4*, 1192.
Contracts—Messrs. Chapman's Contract for Manufacture of Sword Bayonets—Employment of Women in place of Men at Reduced Wages, *May 6*, 1509.
Donegal Artillery, Cessation of Recruiting in, *May 4*, 1192.
Pensions.
Duke, Henry, Case of—Increase of Pension proposed, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Stapleton, John, Case of—Application for increase of Pension, *Apr. 30*, 946.
Royal Field Artillery, 65th Battery—Establishment, Non-inclusion in units of 1st Army Corps, *May 4*, 1191.
Service Bullet—Alleged inefficacy of, in Somaliland Campaign—General Manning's despatch, *Apr. 27*, 461.
Sierra Leone Coaling Station—Progress of armament of, *Apr. 27*, 457.
Somaliland—Cost of Expedition, *Apr. 27*, 458.
South African War Medal—Delay in award of, to 30th Pembroke Yeomanry, *Apr. 27*, 457.

Stationery and Printing
Reading Works and Fair Wages Resolution.
Debate in Com. of Supply, Apr.21, 68.
Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 83.

Stevenson, Mr. F. S. [Suffolk, Eye]
Macedonian Reform Scheme—Information with regard to execution of promised reforms, *Apr. 27*, 465.

Stirling-Maxwell, Sir T. [Glasgow, College]
Holyrood Palace—Drainage of, *Apr. 22*, 113.

Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill.
c. 3R* *Apr. 21*, 1.
l. 1R* *Apr. 27*, 435.
2R* *Com.* * *May 5*, 1325.

Strachey, Sir Edward [Somersetshire, S.]
Agricultural Products — Railway rates, etc., *Apr. 22*, 116.
Exchequer Contributions to Ireland —Amount of, etc., *May* 6, 1503.
Great Western Railway Bill, *Apr. 21*, 71.

Stratford-on-Avon
Proposed erection of building in modern style near Shakespeare's Birthplace—Establishment of National Trust for preservation of historic buildings—Committee of Inquiry proposed.
Q. Mr. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 6*, 1507.

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Bill
c. Rep.* *May 6*, 1499.

Suez Canal
Director, Post of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 21*, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102.

Sugar Bounties
Brussels, International Conference at.
Fiscal System of Great Britain—Alteration of, in accordance with terms of Convention—Nature of measures to be adopted—Date of Introduction.
Q. Mr. Gibson Bowles; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *May 4*, 1195.
Invert Sugar—Necessity for placing in bond under provisions of Brussels Convention.
Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 6*, 1502.
Ratifications deposited at Brussels, *May 5*, 1327, 1363.
Sugar Refineries—Necessity of placing in bond, under terms of Convention—Cost, etc.
Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Elliot, *Apr. 22*, 113.

Sugar Duties
Customs Department Employees—Increase in number of, since introduction of Sugar Tax.
Q. Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Elliot, *Apr. 22*, 112.
Mauritius, Decrease of Exports from, to Australia—Australian Sugar Duty.
Q. Mr. Runciman; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 29*, 788.

Sutton District Water Bill
c. 3R* *Apr. 21*, 1.
l. 1R* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Supply
Army and Navy Estimates, *see* those titles.
Civil Service and Revenue Departments
Agriculture, Board of—Salaries and Expenses, £48, 288, *Com. Apr. 21*, 43; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain, £30, 150, *Com. Apr. 21*, 40; Report, *May 6*, 1588.
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, £37,500, *Com. Apr. 21*, 40; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Harbours under Board of Trade, £14,204, *Com. Apr. 21*, 43; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Houses of Parliament Buildings, £27,700, *Com. Apr. 21*; 35; Report, *May 6*, 1588.
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain, £36,120, *Com. Apr. 21*, 40; Report, *May 6*, 1588.
Peterhead Harbour, £17,980, *Com.*, *Apr. 21*, 43; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Post Office, £6,267,500—*Com.*, *Apr. 30*, 1015; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Public Buildings, Great Britain, £222,000, *Com. Apr. 21*, 42; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Revenue Buildings, £339,000, *Com.*, *Apr. 21*, 41; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Royal Palaces, £40,600, *Com. Apr. 21*, 9; Report, *May 6*, 1588.
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, £51,400, *Com. Apr. 21*, 31; Report, *May 6*, 1588.
Stationery and Printing, £381,233, *Com. Apr. 21*, 68, 83.
Surveys of United Kingdom, £119,019, *Com. Apr. 21*, 43; Report, *May 6*, 1589.
Trade, Board of, £139,395, *Com. Apr. 22*, 116.
Treasury, £52,264, *Com. Apr. 21*, 95.

Surveys of United Kingdom
Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 43.

Swine Fever
Restrictions for its suppression.
Observations in Com. of Supply, *Apr. 21*, 48, 58, 62.

Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. [Oxford University]
London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 673.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1118.

Talbot, Lord Edmund [Sussex, Chichester]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 1092.

Taylor, Mr. Austin [Liverpool, East Toxteth]
Army Guild of the Holy Standard—Relation of, to Army and War Office, *Apr. 27*, 458.

[*cont.*

Taylor, Mr. Austin—*cont.*
Battleships—Old Battleships as Floating Forts, Utilisation of, for defence of Home Ports, proposed, *Apr. 21*, 7.

Taylor, Mr. Theodore [Lancashire, Radcliffe]
Indian State Railways—Delhi Conference, Sanction of Secretary of State with regard to holding of—President of Conference, *May 6*, 1504.

Taxation
Indirect Taxation, Remission of—Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 255, 260, 287, 294, 297, 306, 319, 340, 345.

Tea Duty
Continuance until 1, August 1904—Budget Proposal and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 257, 277, 303, 309, 330, 340, 345.

Technical Education Board
see London Education Bill.

Telegraph Service
London—Telegrams to—Omission of word London, if postal district is given—Transmission of telegrams so addressed, Instructions to telegraph offices on subject of.
Q. Mr M. Hall; *A.* Mr. A. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1367.
Receipt on payment,
Os. Apr. 30, 1018.
Re-directed Telegrams, sending by Post of,
O. Apr. 30, 1018.
Telegraph Conference—International Exchanges between postal and telegraph staffs, Discussion of subject during Conference.
Q. Mr. Bayley; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 944.

Telephone Service
Savings Bank Department, Kensington—Employment of telegraph apparatus, subsequent to decision regarding employment of telephone service.
Q. Mr. C. Hay; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Apr. 23*, 211.

Temperance Reform
Legislation, *see* title Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill.

Tennant, Mr. H. J. [Berwickshire]
Trade Disputes, Intervention by Board of Trade, Number of instances of, *Apr. 27*, 467.

Thames Conservancy
General Reports and Statement of Accounts Presented, *May* 1, 1066, 1072.

Thomas, Mr. D. A. [Merthyr Tydvil]
Coal Export Duty—Incorrect Declarations—Possible loss to Revenue, arising from, *Apr. 27*, 453.

Thompson, Dr. E. C. [Monaghan, N.]
Donegal Artillery—Recruiting in, Cessation of, reasons for, *May 4*, 1192.
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1414.

Thorburn, Sir Walter [Peebles and Selkirk]
Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1585.

Tientsin
Railway Siding Dispute between Great Britain and Russia—Result of Arbitration.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 29*, 789.

Tobacco, Beer and Spirits
Customs Duties on.
Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 349.
Com. of Ways and Means, *May 6*, 1581.

Tomkinson, Mr. J. [Cheshire, Crewe]
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, *May 1*, 113.

Toulmin, Mr. George [Bury, Lancashire]
Bury Magistrates — Representation of Political Parties on Bench—Present disproportion of parties, Further appointments to remedy irregularities, proposed, *May 4*, 1199.
Taxation—Repeal of the Corn Tax—Incidence of the Income Tax — Criticism of measures taken with regard to National Debt and Sinking Fund, *Apr. 23*, 321.

Traction
Electric for Steam, suggested substitution of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 160, 166.

Trade, Board of
President—Rt. Hon. G. W. Balfour.
Parliamentary Secretary—Mr. A. Bonar Law.
Agricultural Interest with regard to Railway Rates—Neglect of, alleged.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 116.
Intelligence Department, Organisation of.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 164, 167.
Labour Department—Changes in Rates of Wages, Hours of Labour, etc.—Report and Statistical Tables, Presented, *Apr. 22*, 107.
Railways—Accidents, Investigation of.
Observations in Com. Apr. 22, 119, 126, 133, 139, 143, 150.
Railway Servants—Powers with Regard to.
Os. May 6, 1594, 1597, 1599, 1608, 1609, 1614, 1620.
Trade Disputes—Intervention of Board of Trade, Number of instances of.
Q. Mr. Tennant; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 467.

Trade and Commerce
Condition in 1902—Budget Statement, *Apr. 23*, 230.
Railway Rates—Effect of.
Observations in Com., Apr. 22, 160, 161.
South Africa, Development in, *see* South Africa—Trade.
Western Persia—River Karun, Values and bulk of total traffic on—Encouragement of use of route by British and Indian traders.
Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 28*, 654.

Trade Disputes
Board of Trade Intervention—Number of instances of.
Q. Mr. Tennant; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 467.

Trade Marks Bill
c. Ordered, *May 1*, 1135.
1R.* *May 1*, 1135.

Trade Unions
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute) — *Debate* [H.C.], *Apr. 27*, 482.
Settle Limestone Quarry Company—Lock-out of Employees — Re-engagement refused until Membership of Trade Union renounced.
Q. Mr. Keir Hardie; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 27*, 468.

Trade Reports Presented
Annual Series, *Apr. 21*, 4; *Apr. 23*, 210; *Apr. 27*, 436, 441, 449; *Apr. 30*, 915, 936; *May 1*, 1072; *May 4*, 1141.
Index to Reports of H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on Trade, etc., *Apr. 21*, 5.

Trafalgar Square
Railway Site in.
Observations in Com., Apr. 21, 33.

Tramways
Electric Trams, Accidents caused by—Protection of the Public.
Q. Sir J. Dimsdale; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *Apr. 30*, 939.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1139.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill
l. 1R.* *May 4*, 1139.

Transport Service
Government Stores for South Africa.
Shipment of.
Q. Mr. C. Allen; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 27*, 462.
Tenders for Carriage of.
Q. Mr. Duncan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 24*, 358.

Transvaal
Administration, Progress of—Papers relating to, Presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 441, 448.
Agricultural Resources—Colonel Thomas' Report.
Q. Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 5*, 1368.
British Indian Subjects, Treatment of—Cases of alleged Injustice—Inquiry into Cases.
Qs. Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 29*, 784.
Censorship of Letters and Telegrams.
Q. Mr. Channing; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 29*, 786.
Compensation—Payment of Claims—From what Funds to be Drawn.
Q. Mr. S. Buxton; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 4*, 1185.
Criminal Procedure Code, Papers relating to, Presented, *May 1*, 1066, 1072.
Expenditure in Transvaal and Orange River Colony on Non-Military Purposes—Statistics.
Q. Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *Apr. 29*, 780.
Finances, Papers relating to, Presented, *Apr. 21*, 5; *Apr. 27*, 439.
Foreigners—Employment of, by Government. Preference given to foreigners alleged. Equality of treatment.
Q. Sir A. Hickman; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1506.
Labour—Recruitment of, in British Central Africa. Protectorate for work in Transvaal, Correspondence relating to, Presented, *Apr. 24*, 356; *Apr. 27*, 440.
Loan
Budget Statement, *Apr. 23*, 342.
Debate [H.C.], *May 6*, 1522.
Items included in £4,000,000 to be repaid by Transvaal out of the Transvaal Loan.
Q. Mr. S. Buxton; *A.* Mr. Ritchie, *May 4*, 1185.
Mines
Native Labourers in—
Recruiting of Natives. Approved rate of wages—Statistics.
Q. Mr. Whitley; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 23*, 219.
Sickness and Mortality among labourers, Keeping of record, Proposed.
Q. Mr. Whitley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 30*, 950.
Ventilation of mines and Protection of workmen, Administration of Law Regulating.
Qs. Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1510.
War Stores, Destruction of—
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 29*, 787.

Trawling
- Numbers on Steam trawlers.
  - *Observations in Com.*, *Apr. 22*, 160, 166.
- Scotland
  - Legislation to prevent depredations of trawlers
    - *Os.* Mr. C. Wason, *Apr. 22*, 189, Mr. Black, 192, Mr. Weir, 195, Mr. Bignold, 196, Mr. Crombie, 198, Mr. G. Murray, 199, Captain Sinclair, 203.
  - Penalties for Illegal Trawling.
    - *Os.* Mr. Black, *Apr. 22*, 194.
  - Three Mile Limit, Extension of.
    - *Os.* Mr. C. Wason, *Apr. 22*, 189; Mr. Weir. 195; Mr. Bignold, 197; Mr. Crombie, 198; Mr. Graham Murray, 200.

Treasury
- Vote for, *Apr. 21*, 95.

Trinidad
- Port of Spain, Waterworks Bill—Submission of, to Secretary of State for the Colonies, previous to introduction.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1510.
- Riots—Number of Deaths resulting from —Value of Public Property Destroyed.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *May 6*, 1510.

Tuberculosis
- Bovine Tuberculosis—Commissions on, cost of—Report of Commission, date of—Compensation for confiscation proposed.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Joyce, Mr. Flavin; *As.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr. 29*, 791.

Tully Mr. Jasper [Leitrim, South]
- Ireland.
  - Labourers' Cottages—Applications for —Cottages erected, number of cases in which compulsory powers were or were not sought in putting Acts into force, *May 5*, 1374.
  - National School Teachers' Salaries, effect of change in mode of payment—Complaints with regard to loss involved—Award of normal salary, number of cases of, etc., *May 5*, 1374.
- Royal Irish Constabulary—Recruiting, cessation of—Applicants for admission, number of—Periods over which applications extended, etc., *May 5*, 1372.
- Sligo Lunatic Asylum—Report of Inspectors on condition of—Resolution with regard to provision of accommodation for excess patients, Steps for carrying out, *May 5*, 1375.

Turkey
- Correspondence respecting affairs of South Eastern Europe, Presented *Apr. 29*, 779, *Apr. 30*, 915.

Tweedmouth, Lord
- Land Registers (Scotland) Bill, *Apr. 30*, 919.

Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill
- *l· Com.* Apr. 27*, 434.

Uganda
- Entebbe.
  - Removal of native huts proposed.
  - Native and European Quarters, Proximity of.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. Samuel. *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 6*, 1504.
  - Water Supply, Inadequacy of—Contamination by sewage.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. Samuel. *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 6*, 1503.
- Railways. Construction of Railway from Lake Victoria to Lake Albert.
  - *Q.* Mr. H. Samuel. *A.* Lord Cranborne, *May 6*, 1512.

Ulster
- Winter Sessions—Arrangements for trial of Civil business at.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Wood. *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *May 6*, 1516.

University of London
- Education — Authority for London, Relations with.
  - *O.* Sir Michael Foster, *Apr. 29*, 829.

Upton-on-Severn
- Worcestershire Licensing Committee—Decision of, with regard to—Reinstatement of Town proposed.
  - *Q.* Colonel Long; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 30*, 954.

Vaccination
- Lymph.
  - Cost of, Supplied to Local Government Board of Scotland.
    - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 6*, 1515.
  - Local Government Board of Scotland, Contribution of, in payment for Government Supply.
    - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 6*, 1515.
  - Output of, by Local Government Board during last Financial Year.
    - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 4*, 1186.
  - Terms on which Supplied by Local Government Board to Medical Practitioners in Private Practice, other than Public Vaccinators.
    - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Lawson, *Apr. 30*, 956.
- National Vaccine Establishment—Details of Expenditure.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. Lawson, *Apr. 30*, 956.
- Poplar Registers—Report of Committee of Poplar Guardians with respect to entries in—Special Report of Medical Inspector.
  - *Q.* Mr. Guthrie; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *Apr, 27*, 452.

Vagrant Children Bill
c. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 481.

Venezuela
Arbitration—State of negotiations with regard to proposal for, etc.
Q. Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 21*, 7.
Claims of Nations against—Order of Consideration of—Expenses of Blockade—Attitude of Venezuelan Government.
Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Apr. 27*, 465.

Vickers, Son and Maxim
Fair Wages Resolution—Violation of, at Brightside Works, alleged.
Q. Mr. K. Hardie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 4*, 1188.

Vincent, Col. Sir H. [Sheffield, Central]
Alien Immigration — Number of Immigrants rejected by United States and Canada now maintained at British expense, *May 1*, 1073.
Corn Duty.
Budget proposal in respect to remission of Duty — Goods to which proposal applies, *Apr. 27*, 454.
Yield for Year 1902–1903, *Apr. 27*, 454.
Mosely Mission Reports—Arrangements for Publication of, *May 4*, 1183.

Volunteers
Artillery — City of London Artillery Volunteers — Guns, Uselessness of, alloted to Volunteers—Speedy equipment of Guns recently supplied to Regiment, proposed.
Q. Mr. Broadhurst; *A.* Lord Stanley, *May 4*, 1192.
Return—Address for, *Apr. 30*, 938.
Sergeant Instructors Modification of Army Order with regard to payment of.
Q. Mr. Randles; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 5*, 1368.

Vote of Censure
see Bethesda (Industrial Dispute).

Wales
Bethesda (Industrial Dispute).
Debate [H.C.], *Apr. 27*, 428.
Crown Lands, in.
Debate [H.C.], *Apr. 29*, 900.
Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill.
Debate on 2R. [H.C.], *May 1*, 1133.
Religious Instruction in Schools.
O. Mr. Lloyd-George, *Apr. 29*, 847.

Wakefield and District Tramways Bill
l. Com. * *Apr. 27*, 434.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill
c. Com. * *Apr. 28*, 641.
3R.* *May 1*, 1068.

Wallis, Mr. Henry, J.P.
Swearing in of, in manner required by Law.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 5*, 1372.

Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W., *Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster* [Devon, Tiverton]
Bury Magistracy — Representation of Political Parties in—Present disproportion of parties—Further appointments to remedy inequality, *May 4*, 1199.

Walton, Mr. Joseph [York, W.R., Barnsley]
Budget—Discussion, Opportunity for, *Apr. 23*, 338.
Congo Free State, British Consuls for—Consideracion of additional appointments, *May 4*, 1196.
Manchuria—Evacuation of.
Manchurian Convention — Failure on part of Russian Government to observe provisions of—Steps to secure fulfilment of promise, *Apr. 30*, 952.
Mining Experts—Attempt of Russian Government to secure the employment of Russians only—Steps to secure equality for all Nationalities, *Apr .30*, 953.
Russian demand for dismissal of British doctor from position of health officer at Niu-Chwang in favour of a Russian doctor, *Apr. 30*, 952.
Niu-Chwang Revenues, Retention of by Russian Government, Restoration of, result of representations with regard to, *Apr. 30*, 952.
Tientsin Railway Siding Dispute—Award in respect of, *Apr. 80*, 951.

Walton, Mr. J, Lawson [Leeds, S.]
Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1586.
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 896.

War Expenditure
Budget Statement and Debate, *Apr. 23*, 234, 298.

Warner, Mr. T. Courtenay [Stafford, Lichfield]
Great Western Railway Bill, *Apr. 21*, 82.
Railways- Board of Trade—Agricultural Products, Rates for — Railway inspection, *Apr. 22*, 137, 141.
Trade, Board of —Unsatisfactory condition, *Apr. 22*, 169,

Wason, Mr. J. C. [Orkney, and Shetland]
Fiji.
Chiefs—Deportation of, without Trial, Removal of Ordinance from Statute Book with regard to, proposed, *May 5*, 1370.
Forced Labour on the Roads, *May 5*, 1369.

[*cont.*

Wason, Mr. J. C.—*cont.*
- Fiji—*cont.*
  - Native Petition to the King—Permission for Presentation of, *May 5*, 1370.
  - Native Regulations, Report on—Steps to obtain Report from New Zealand, *May 5*, 1369.
  - Poll Tax—Alleged imposition of, Effect upon Labour, etc., *May 5*, 1369.
  - Suva Bubonic Plague Hospital—Protest against Establishment of—Reply in answer to, *May 5*, 1370.
- Motor Cars.
  - Dublin Fatality—Withdrawal of proceedings against Marquess of Downshire—Grounds for, *Apr. 27*, 478.
  - Speed Regulations—Imposition of penalty for breach of law—Imposition of licence, consideration of, in forthcoming Bill, *May 5*, 1364.
  - Wantage Fatality—Return of "Accidental Death"—Exoneration of driver—No inquiry other than that of Coroner held, *Apr. 27*, 468.
  - Trawling, Illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish fisheries, *Apr. 22*, 189.

Water Orders Confirmation Bill
- *l.* 1R.* *May 4*, 1139.

Ways and Means
- Budget, *see* that title.
- Committee to have Precedence of Business of Supply—Non-interruption of Proceedings under Standing Order (Sittings of the House), *Apr. 23*, 228.
- Considered in Committee, *May 6*, 1581.

Weir, Mr. J. G. [Ross and Cromarty]
- Africa, Famine in Central—Steps to Alleviate Distress—Increase of Mortality, *May 6*, 1512.
- Education.
  - Continuation Classes in Crofting Counties, Grants for—Number of Schools Receiving Grants—Amount Paid, *Apr. 28*, 646.
- India.
  - Irrigated Lands, Revenue Derived from—Acreage of Lands Contributing to Revenue, *Apr. 30*, 941.
  - Irrigation Works, Special Grants for Unexpended Balance of, Reason for, *Apr. 30*, 942.
  - Loans by Government to Native States, Amount of—Average Rate of Interest, etc., *Apr. 30*, 941.
- Kobe Medical Practice, Case of Mr. S. T. Knaggs, M.D., F.R.C.S.I., *Apr. 28*, 656.

Weir, Mr. J. G.—*cont.*
- London Underground Railway—System of Electric Traction—Date of Introduction, *Apr. 30*, 953.
- Macdonald, Late Sir Hector—Ceylon Coronation Parade, Inspection and Review of, entrusted to—Action of Governor-General of Ceylon, Independent of Colonial Office, *Apr. 28*, 684.
- Panna.
  - Rajah—Death of Uncle of, Cost of Inquiry, *Apr. 30*, 946.
  - Treaties between British Government and Rajahs, *Apr, 30*, 942.
- Scotland.
  - Aultbea Pier, Construction of, Decision with regard to, *May 4*, 1183.
  - Avoch Channel, Lighting of—Scheme of Northern Lighthouse Commissioners, Arrangements for Carrying out, *Apr. 28*, 658.
  - Avoch Harbour, Grant-in-Aid for Construction of, Amount of, *May 6*, 1515.
  - Harbour Grants, Amount of—Sum allocated to Harbours in Crofting Counties, *Apr. 28*, 658.
  - Holyrood Palace, Occupation and Sanitary Condition of, *Apr. 21*, 16; *May 6*, 1591.
  - Inebriate Reformatories, Number of—Amount contributed to, out of Vote for Office of Secretary for Scotland, *May 6*, 1515.
  - Land Laws, Expediency of introduction, *Apr. 28*, 659.
  - Light Railways Act, Working of, *Apr. 22*, 158.
  - Treasury—Exchequer Department in Scotland, *Apr. 21*, 98.
  - Trawling, illegal—Injuries sustained by Scottish Fisheries, *Apr. 22*, 195.
- Seaforth Highlanders—1st Volunteer Battalion—Discharges—Withholding of, from men joining Lovat Scouts, alleged—Inquiry proposed, *Apr. 22*, 111.
- Smallpox—Private establishment for patients in County of London area—Number of, inspection, etc., *May 4*, 1186.
- South African Mines—Recruitment of Labour from British East Africa Protectorate, for Work in—Protest of Blantyre Chamber of Agriculture—Discouragement of Scheme proposed *Apr. 28*, 655.
- Trinidad.
  - Port of Spain Waterworks Bill—Submission of, to Secretary of State for the Colonies, previous to Introduction, *May 6*, 1510.
  - Riots—Deaths resulting from, Number of, Value of Public Property destroyed, *May 6*, 1510.

[*cont.*

Weir, Mr. J. G.—*cont.*
Vaccination.
  Lymph—Government Supply of.
    Cost of, Supplied to Local Government Board of Scotland, *May 6*, 1516.
    Money paid by Local Government Board of Scotland for Lymph, *May 6*, 1515.
    Output by Local Government Board, *May 4*, 1186.
    Terms on which supplied, *Apr. 30*, 956.
  National Vaccine Establishment Expenditure, details of, *Apr. 30*, 956.

Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.

Wemyss, Earl of
Shops (Early Closing) Bill, *Apr. 28*, 595.

West India Docks
Admiralty Stationery Store Staff, Promotion of labourer of nine months service to charge of, in preference to, men of service of longer periods alleged, Inquiry proposed.
  Q. Mr. K. Hardie; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *May 6*, 1508.

West Indies
Sugar Industries—Bill introduced into Jamaica Legislative Council empowering guarantee out of Colonial revenues of interest on capital employed in establishing Sugar factories —Progress under Bill.
  Q. Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Apr. 21*, 8.

Western Trust Bill
c Rep.* *Apr. 27*, 446.
3R.* *Apr. 30*, 932.

Weymouth Licensing Sessions
Non-Admission of women and children to public houses for purpose of making slate club payments as a condition of renewing licences.
  Q. Sir B. Simeon; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr 27*, 470.

Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. R.—[York, W.R. Ripon]
Education Act — Town and County Councils — Forfeit of money by postponement of adoption of Act—Case of Durham County Council, *Apr. 27*, 472.
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 385.

Whitley, Mr. J. H. [Halifax]
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, Rates on, *Apr. 21*, 41.
Land Registry Office, *Apr. 21*, 42.
Office of Works and Board of Agriculture, Expenditure by, *Apr. 21*, 34.

Whitley, Mr. J. H.—*cont.*
Osborne House and Gardens, Expenditure on—Increase in cost of maintenance of Royal Palaces, *Apr. 21*, 25, 26, 38.
Prevention of Corruption Bill, *May 6*, 1587.
South Africa, British trade in—American competition, *Apr. 22*, 168.
South African Loan, *May 6*, 1572.
Stationery and Printing—Protest against Magnitude of Vote—Reporting of *Hansard*, *Apr. 21*, 89.
Suez Canal, Directors of, *Apr. 21*, 100.
Transvaal Mines.
Native Labour, Employment of—Recruiting of Natives — Approved Rate of wages, *Apr. 23*, 219.
Record of Sickness and Mortality among Native Labourers, Keeping of, proposed, *Apr. 30*, 930.

Whittaker, Mr. T. P. [Yorkshire, W.R. Spen Valley]
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 367.

Wicklow
Valuation of Licensed Premises—Raising of, involving increase in licence duty.
  Q. Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *May 4*, 1202.

Williams, Rt. Hon. J. Powell [Birmingham. S.]
Bright Statue, Position of, *Apr. 21*, 35.
Osborne House, Expenditure on—Inclusion of Vote in Civil Service Estimates, *Apr. 21*, 29.

Wilson, Mr. F. [Norfolk, Mid]
Soldiers in County Asylums — Case of Private Bowers, *May 4*, 1189

Wilson, Mr. H. J. [Yorkshire, W. R., Holmfirth]
China Opium Tax — Imposition of additional Tax by Government of the province of Canton — Discontinuance of, owing to protests of British Consul, *May 5*, 1365.

Wilson, Mr. John [Falkirk Burghs]
Holyrood Palace — Withdrawal of Lord High Commissioner's Court, *Apr. 21*, 12.
Taxation—Repeal of Corn Duty—Reduction of the Income Tax — Protest against the Coal Tax, *Apr. 23*, 319.

Wilson, Mr. John [Durham, Mid]
Naval and Military Expenditure, Burden of, *Apr. 23*, 247.

Wilson, Mr. J. W. [Worcestershire, N.]
Licensing Law (Compensation for the Non-renewal) Bill, *Apr. 24*, 424.

Winchester Water and Gas Bill
l. 1R.* *Apr. 27*, 435.

Wireless Telegraphy
Admiralty—Annual Expenditure on.
Q. Mr. Harmsworth ; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *Apr. 28*, 647.
Lighthouses and Shore—Communication between.
Observations in Com., *Apr. 22*, 152, 155, 165.
Light-ships—Delay in Providing Light Vessels with Apparatus.
Qs. Major Seely ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Apr. 28*, 657.
Somaliland Military Expedition, Employment of Marine Instruments, alleged—Substitution of, for Apparatus adapted to Overland Use—Employment of Experts.
Q. Sir J. Leng ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 30*, 947.

Wirral Railway Bill
l. Rep.* *Apr. 30*, 913.
3R* *May 5*, 1326.

Wolverton, Lord
Harrison, Captain, Appeal of—Against suspension of certificate of ss. "Grecian," Payment of costs of Appeal—Result of Conference with regard to, *May 5*, 1354.
Loading Port Clause in Ships' Articles of Agreement—Board of Trade Circular with regard to—Decision in Thames Police Court—Proposed withdrawal of Circular, *May 5*, 1354.

Wood, Mr. J. [Down, E.]
Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1456.
Irish Resident Magistrates — Names, Qualifications, Religion of Magistrates appointed during last twelve months, *May 6*, 1517.
Lough Neagh, overflowing of, Introduction of legislation for abatement of flooding, *May 6*, 1516.
Ulster Winter Sessions — Arrangements for trial of Civil Business at, *May 6*, 1516.

Workmen's Compensation Act
Medical Referees assisting County Court Judges, Number of Cases, Statistics.
Q. Mr. S. Ormsby-Gore ; *A.* Mr. Cochrane, *Apr. 22*, 112.

Workmen's Trains
Debate [H.C.], *Apr. 29*, 873.
Appeals, Cost of, 884.
Cheap Trains Act, Objects and operation of, 875, 889, 892, 895, 890.
Clerks' right to cheap transit, 893.
District Railway, Workmen's tickets for, 877, 894.
Great Central, Workmen's tickets for, 878, 887, 899.

Workmen's Trains—*cont.*
Debate—cont.
Great Eastern, Workmen's tickets for, 877, 882, 887.
Great Northern, Workmen's tickets for, 878.
Housing Problem — Connection with cheap transit, 876, 882.
Ireland, Plea for cheap transit in, 895.
London & South Western, Workmen's tickets for, 877, 884.
London, Brighton & South Coast, Workmen's tickets for, 884, 887.
Manchester Corporation, Action of, 880.
Metropolitan Railway, Workmen's tickets for, 877, 887.
Midland Railway, Workmen's tickets for, 878.
North London Railway, Workmen's tickets for, 887.
Railway Commission, Appeals to, 876, 884.
Trade, Board of—Power to enforce cheap transit, 376, 882, 892, 894, 896, 899.

Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart—*Temporary Chairman of Committees* [Sheffield, Hallam]
Indexing of *Hansard*, *Apr. 21*, 87.
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 886.

Wright, Mr. Whitaker
Prosecution of—Discussion of conduct of Law Officers of the Crown in regard to Opportunity afforded by Vote for the Salaries of Law Officers of the Crown.
Q. Mr. Lambert ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *May 4*, 1204.

Wylie, Mr. [Dumbartonshire]
Workmen's Trains, *Apr. 29*, 898.

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G.—*Chief Secretary for Ireland* [Dover]
Borough Funds Bill, *May 4*, 1324.
Constabulary, Royal Irish.
Official Papers, Destruction of, *May 4*, 1203 ; *May 5*, 1370.
Recruiting, Cessation of—Applicants for admission, Number of — Periods over which applications extended, etc., *May 5*, 1372.
Dublin — Marlborough Street Training College—Dwelling-house Accommodation for Students, Provision of, *May 4*, 1200.
Dundrum Lunatic Asylum—Re-arrest of Escaped Criminal Lunatics—Case of Sheehan, *May 4*, 1188.

[*cont.*

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G.—*cont.*
- Education.
  - National School Teachers, Salaries of.
    - Complaints with regard to Loss involved by Change in Mode of Payment—Award of Normal Salary, Number of Cases, etc., *May 5*, 1374.
    - Kilkitt, Assistant Teacher at—Salary, Non-payment of, *Apr. 22*, 110.
  - National Schools—Inspectors' Reports for 1901, Date of Sending to Board of Education, *May 6*, 1518.
- Evictions on Berridge Estate—Evictions for Non-payment of Rent, Extent and Rental of Holdings, etc., *Apr. 23*, 224.
- Farranes Licensing Prosecution—Sergeant Glyn, Conduct of, *May 6*, 1519.
- Ireland, Depopulation of—Enlargement of Provisions dealing with Irish Land Bill, in view of, *Apr. 23*, 212.
- Irish Land Bill.
  - Tenants, Principle of Selection of, to Share Reductions of Payment, *May 4*, 1201.
  - Town Parks, Inclusion of, in Bill, *May 4*, 1201.
- Irish Lights Commission—Steps to bring Work of, within Scope of Parliamentary Control, *Apr. 23*, 213.
- Kiladysert Police—Removal of Reporter from Petty Sessions Court by, Authority for Action, *Apr. 23*, 224.
- Labourers' Cottages, Application for—Cottages erected—Number of Cases in which Compulsory Powers were or were not sought in putting Acts into Force, *May 5*, 1374.
- Labourers' (Ireland) Act, Protest of Sligo Rural District Council against Value placed by Local Government Arbitrator on Land sought to be acquired for purposes of Labourers' Acts, *May 4*, 1202.
- Land Purchase Acts.
  - Recovery of Instalments of Annuities under, *Apr. 27*, 455.
  - Unexpended Funds under, *May 4*, 1188.
- Land Purchase — Default of payment, Amount from grants-in-aid of local taxation on account of, per year, Repayment of Guarantee Fund, *Apr. 28*, 649.
- Listowel Poor Law Union — Report of Auditor in regard to—Consideration of, *May 5*, 1368.
- Magistrates—Justices of the Peace and Resident Magistrates.
  - Beckett, Mr. Jacob, J.P.—Date of Appointment — Attendance at Castlebar Petty Sessions since Appointment—Qualification for Voting at Election of Petty Sessions Clerk, *May 6*, 1518.

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G.—*cont.*
- Magistrates—*cont.*
  - Heraghty, Mr., J. P.—Number of Attendances at Castlebar Petty Sessions up to February 25, 1903, *May 6*, 1518.
  - Magistrates — Names, Qualifications, and Religion of Irish Resident Magistrates appointed during last twelve months, *May 6*, 1517.
- Poor Law.
  - Medical Officers in Ireland, Position of—Inclusion of Question of within Scope of Royal Commission inquiring into Amalgamation of Irish Unions, *May 4*, 1202.
  - Workhouses in Ireland and Union Boundaries — Appointment of Commission to inquire into Amalgamation of, *May 5*, 1373.
- River Bann and Lough Neagh.
  - Overflowing of, Introduction of Legislation for Abatement of Flooding, *May 6*, 1516.
  - Pollution of River Tributaries, by Discharge of Dye Stuffs and Chemicals into — Abstraction of Water from, *Apr. 27*, 454.
- St. Louis Exhibition—Exhibition of Irish Industries — Arrangements for, by Irish Department of Agriculture, *May 6*, 1517.
- Sligo.
  - Grazing Lands—Sub-division of, to Labourers and Small Farmers—Resolution with regard to, *May 6*, 1517.
  - Lunatic Asylum—Report of Inspectors on Condition of Resolution with regard to Provision of Accommodation for Excess Patients—Steps for carrying out, *May 5*, 1375.
- Wallis, Mr. Henry, J.P.—Swearing in of in manner required by Law, *May 5*, 1372.
- Wicklow—Valuation of Licensed Premises, Raising of, involving increase of licence duty, *May 4*, 1202.

Wyndham-Quin, Colonel [Glamorganshire, S.]
- Irish Land Bill, *May 5*, 1475.

Yeomanry
- 30th Pembroke Yeomanry—South African War Medal, Delay in award of.
  - *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Apr. 27*, 457.

Yeomanry, Imperial
- Pay, Arrears of, Case of late Captain Mackenzie, Norfolk Regiment.
  - *Q.* Mr. Mansfield; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Apr. 28*, 653.

Yerburgh, Mr. Robert A. [Chester]
  Militia Officers—Recognition of Services during South African War, *Apr. 29*, 783.
    Consideration of recommendation with regard to, *May 6*, 1505.
  South African War, Officers and men of Regular Forces, Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers, and Irregular Forces serving in—Numbers of, Rewards and Promotions, *May 6*, 1506.

Yoxall, Mr J. H. [Nottingham]
  Historic Building, Proposed creation of building in modern style near Shakespeare's Birthplace in Stratford—Establishment of National Trust for preservation of historic buildings—Committee of Inquiry proposed, *May 6*, 1507.
  London Education Bill, *Apr. 28*, 719.